Cobalt CommunityResearch

Supporting Decisions | Inspiring Ideas

City of Copperas Cove Citizen Engagement and Priority Assessment

September 3, 2013

City of Copperas Cove

2013022

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Background on Cobalt Community Research

- 501c3 not for profit research coalition
- Mission to provide research and education
- Developed to meet the research needs of schools, local governments and nonprofit organizations

Measuring Where You Are:
Why Research Matters

- Understanding community values and priorities helps you plan and communicate more effectively about City decisions
- Perception impacts behaviors you care about
- Understanding community perception helps you improve and promote the City
- Community engagement improves support for difficult decisions
- Reliable data on community priorities aids in balancing demands of vocal minorities with the reality of limited resources
- Bottom line outcome measurement of service and trust: Good administration requires quality measurement and reporting

Study Goals

- Support budget and strategic planning decisions
- Explore service assumptions to ensure baseline service measures are understood
- Identify which aspects of community provide the greatest leverage on citizens' overall satisfaction – and how satisfaction, in turn, influences the community's image and citizen behaviors such as volunteering, remaining in the community, recommending it to others and encouraging businesses to start up in the community
- Measure improvements by tracking performance over time
- Benchmark performance against a standardized performance index statewide, regionally and nationally

Bottom Line

- The City's overall ACSI Score improved slightly in 2013
  - Overall respondents:
    - 2013 = 56
    - 2011 = 54
- There are several areas where improvement can have significant impact on engagement:
  - 2013 Drivers:
    - City Government Management
    - Economic Health
    - Property Taxes
    - Transportation Infrastructure
    - Parks & Recreation

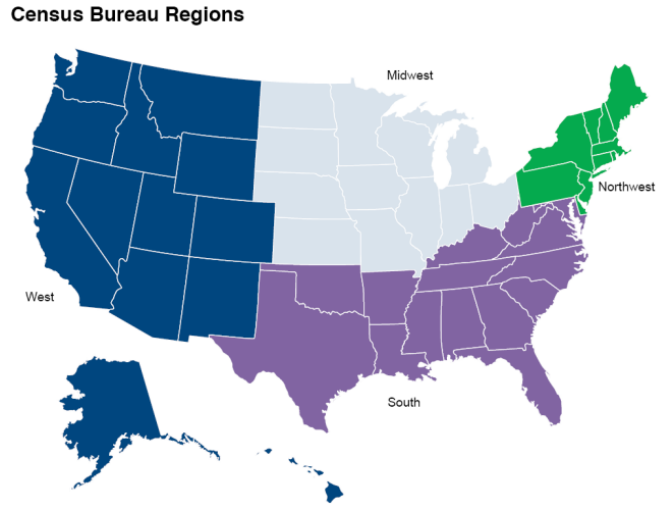
  2011 Drivers:
  - Transportation Infrastructure
  - City Government Management
  - Economic Health
  - Shopping Opportunities
- Top four potential future projects the City should consider:
  - Support upgrades to City Park (walking trails, soccer complexes, etc.)
  - Construct a recreation center
  - Support downtown revitalization projects
  - Expand City-sponsored activities for Youth
- 55% of respondents prefer to receive information from the City by Mail. Other preferred modes:
  - Email (44%), City website (37%) and Newsletter (35%)

Bottom Line (cont.)

- Top funding priorities:
  - Firefighting/rescue services
  - Emergency medical services (Ambulance)
  - Crime control/police services
  - Sewer services
  - Street lighting
  - City staff responsiveness to utility problems
  - New business development
- 65% of respondents support using a portion of sales tax revenue to establish a crime control district (down 10% from '11)
- Respondents are likely to support the development on an online, virtual library (52% marked an 8, 9 or 10)
- 66% say the City Logo does NOT need to be updated
- 36% of respondents say the City Motto should be updated
- 43% are interested in participating in single stream recycling
- Detailed information by specific demographic groups is available to aid in policy review
  - Detail by: years of residency, own/rent, employment, age, education, income, marital status, household composition, gender, ethnicity and area of town

Available Tools

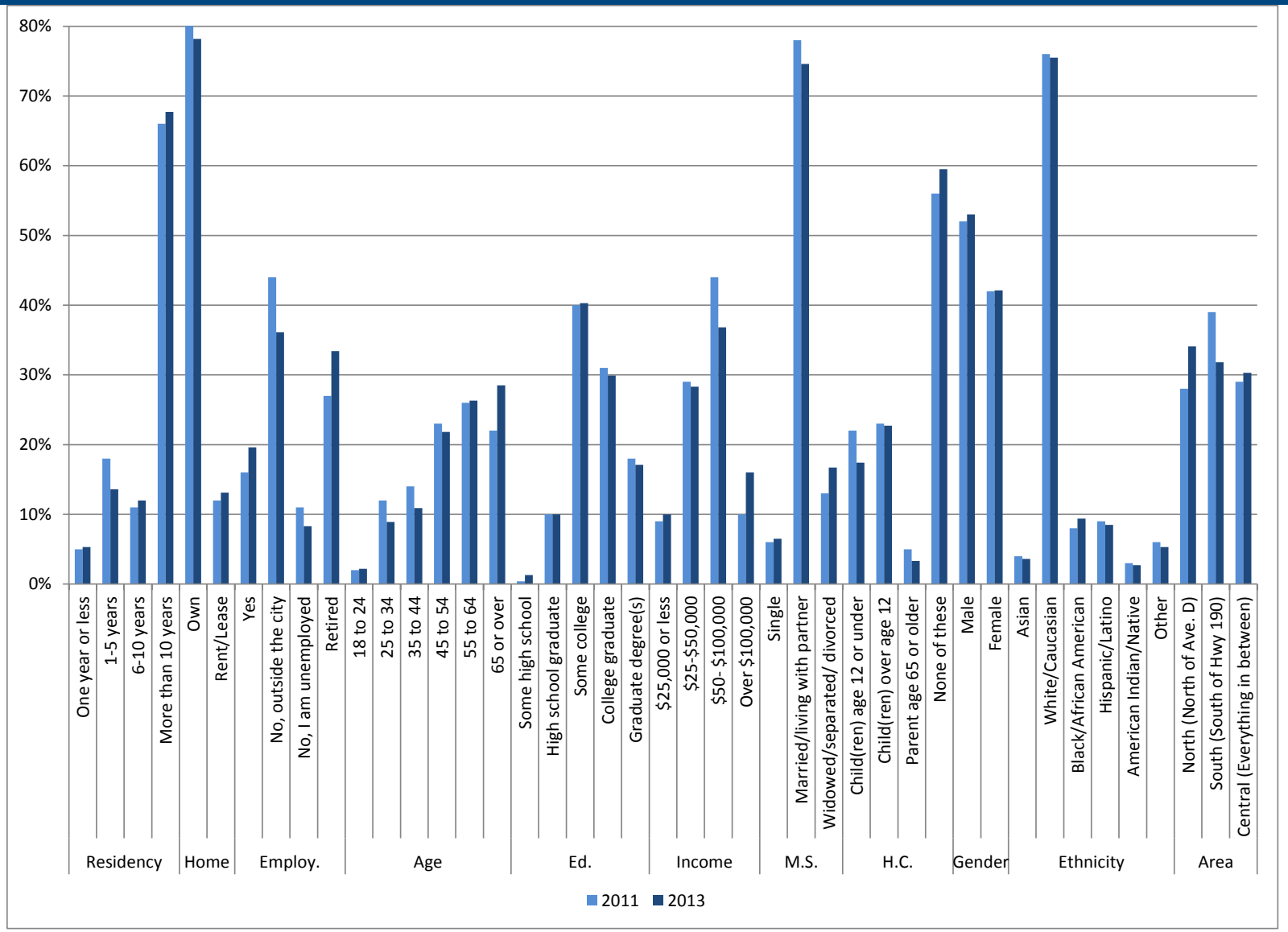
- Detailed questions and responses broken by demographic group and "thermal mapped" so lower scores are red and higher scores are blue
- Online portal of core benchmarking questions to allow side-by-side comparisons of groups and subgroups (for example, breaking down the scores of individuals divided by age, gender, etc.)
- Online portal allowing download of core data into MS Excel
- Comparison scores with local governments in Texas, the South and across the nation
- Comparison scores with non-local government comparables (industries, companies, federal agencies)



Methodology

- Distributed surveys to all residents through the utility bills in early spring 2013
- Valid response from 551 residents, providing a conventional margin of error of +/- 4.1 percent in the raw data and an ACSI margin of error of +/- 1.8 percent
  - 2013 – 551 responses, +/- 4.1 percent in raw data, +/- 1.8% for ACSI
  - 2011 – 606 responses, +/- 3.9 percent in raw data, +/- 1.7% for ACSI
- Note: National surveys with a margin of error +/- 5% require a sample of 384 responses to reflect a population of 330,000,000

Respondent Profile



Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

Sample:

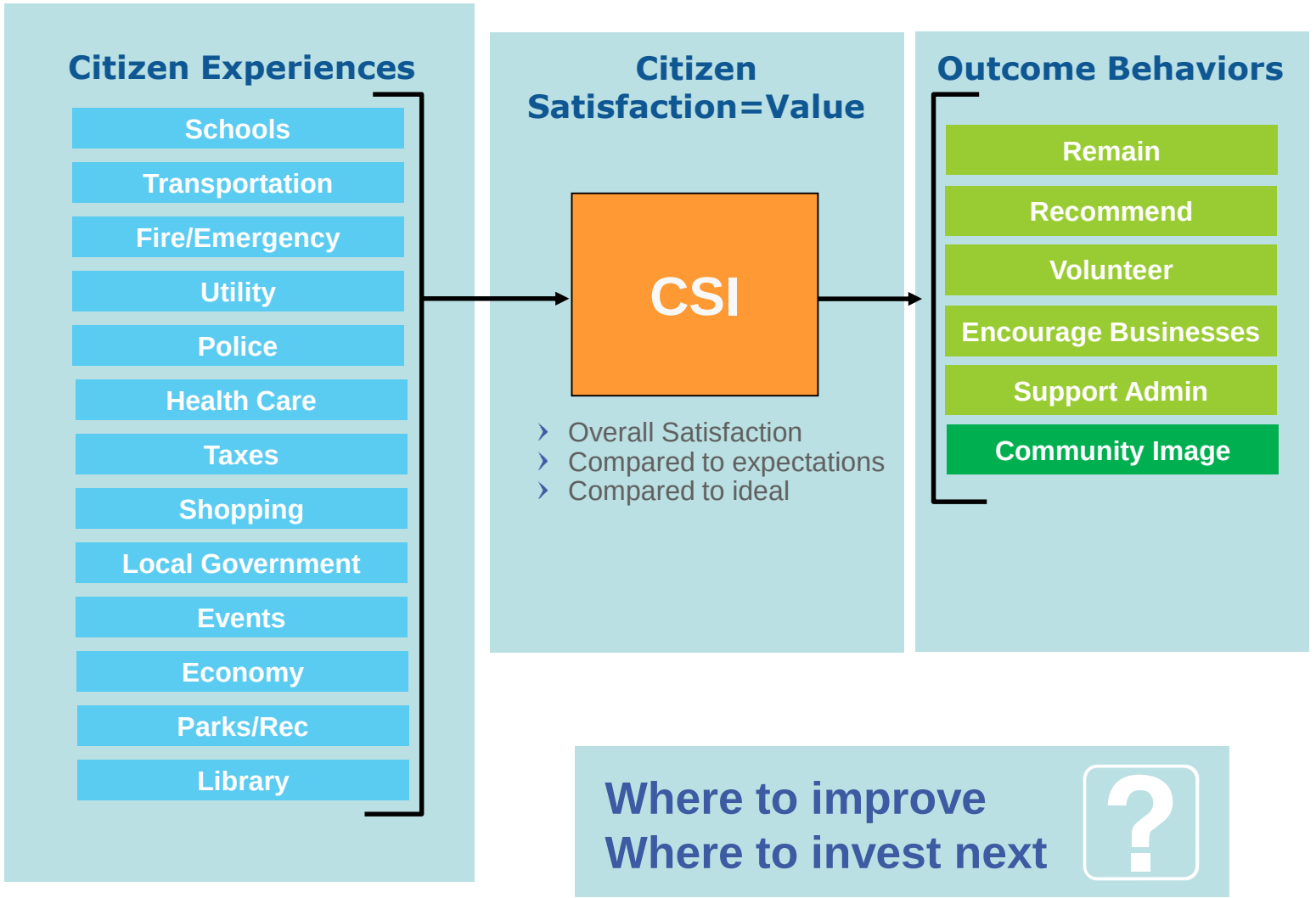
City of Copperas Cove
2013 Funding Importance Scores
Scale 1 to 10

		Public Safety Services					City Service Hours/Response				
		Crime Control/Police Services	Emergency Medical Services (Ambulance)	Firefighting/Rescue Services	Animal Control	Code Compliance	Hours of Operation for City Parks and Recreation	Hours of Operation for City Hall	Hours of Operation for Animal Control	Hours of Operation for Utility Customer Service	Responsiveness of City Staff Regarding Utility Problems
2011 Funding Importance		**8.1**	**8.3**	**8.3**	**6.5**	**6.4**	**6.0**	**5.8**	**5.9**	**6.3**	**6.9**
2013 Funding Importance		**8.2**	**8.4**	**8.4**	**6.5**	**6.3**	**6.3**	**6.1**	**6.1**	**6.6**	**7.1**
Residency	One year or less	8.5	8.2	8.3	6.9	6.7	7.0	6.8	6.8	7.2	7.7
	1-5 years	8.4	8.7	8.7	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.1	5.7	6.7	7.0
	6-10 years	7.9	8.2	8.1	6.1	5.5	6.2	5.2	5.5	6.2	6.8
	More than 10 years	8.2	8.4	8.4	6.6	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.6	7.1
Do you own or rent/lease your residence?	Own	8.3	8.4	8.4	6.5	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.6	7.1
	Rent/Lease	8.1	8.3	8.4	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.1	5.9	6.5	6.9
Currently work inside City?	Yes	8.4	8.4	8.6	6.7	6.4	6.1	5.9	6.0	6.5	7.1
	No, outside the city	8.0	8.3	8.3	6.1	5.9	6.3	6.0	6.0	6.6	6.9
	No, I am unemployed	8.4	8.4	8.3	6.5	5.7	6.2	5.4	5.9	6.3	7.4
	Retired	8.3	8.5	8.5	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.5	6.4	6.8	7.1
Age	18 to 24	7.1	7.4	7.3	5.3	6.3	5.7	5.3	4.8	5.4	7.1
	25 to 34	8.1	8.5	8.4	6.6	6.4	6.3	6.0	5.9	6.4	6.6
	35 to 44	8.5	8.5	8.6	6.2	5.7	6.6	5.4	5.7	6.5	7.1
	45 to 54	8.2	8.3	8.3	6.6	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.6	6.9
	55 to 64	8.1	8.3	8.2	6.1	5.7	6.2	5.8	5.7	6.3	6.9
	65 or over	8.2	8.5	8.5	6.9	7.0	6.5	6.7	6.6	7.0	7.4

City of Copperas Cove

Results

Citizen Engagement Model



Where to improve
Where to invest next

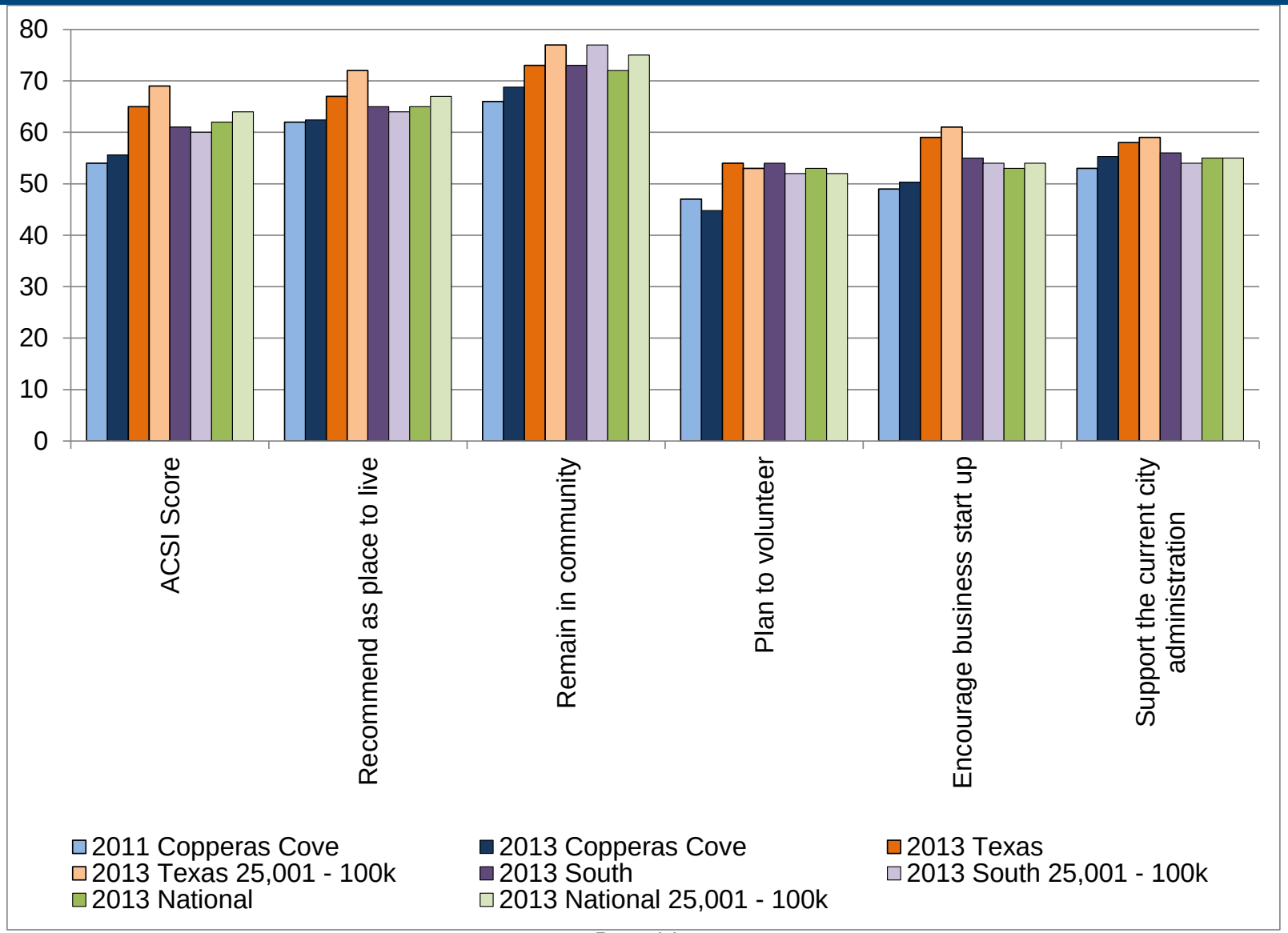
Comparing to 2011

Areas with strong impact on overall engagement

	2011 Copperas Cove	2013 Copperas Cove	Change from '11 to '13
Transportation Infrastructure	44	45	1
Fire and Emergency Medical Services	79	79	0
Utility Services	68	68	0
Police Department	73	71	-2
Property Taxes	47	50	3
Shopping Opportunities	54	56	2
Local Government	50	57	7
Community Events	55	55	0
Economic Health	51	54	3
Parks and Recreation	59	56	-3
Library	80	68	-12
ACSI Score	54	56	2
Community Image	58	57	-1
Recommend as a place to live	62	62	0
Remain in community	66	69	3
Plan to volunteer	47	45	-2
Encourage business start-up	49	50	1
Support current city administration	53	55	2

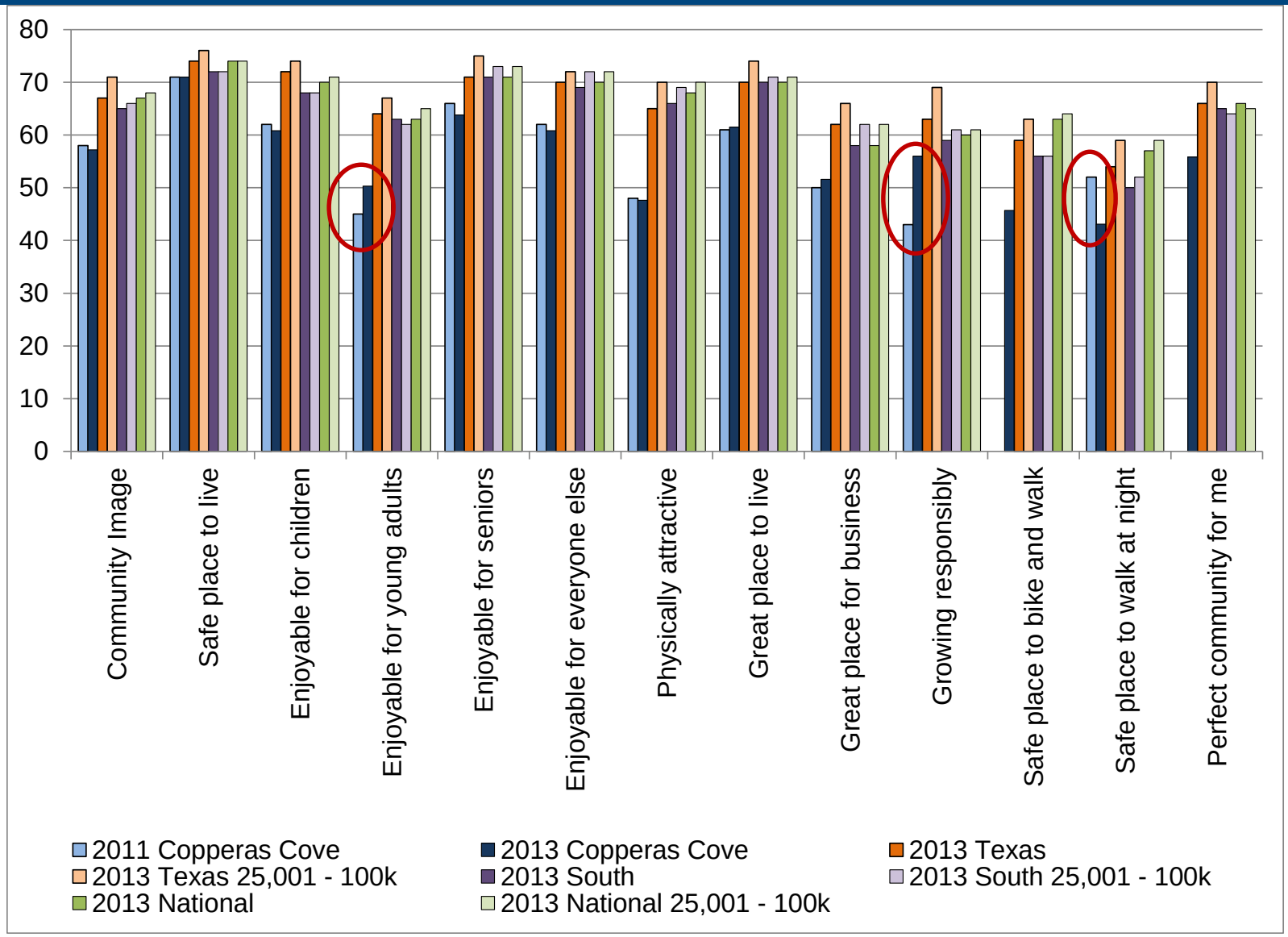
Outcome Behaviors to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



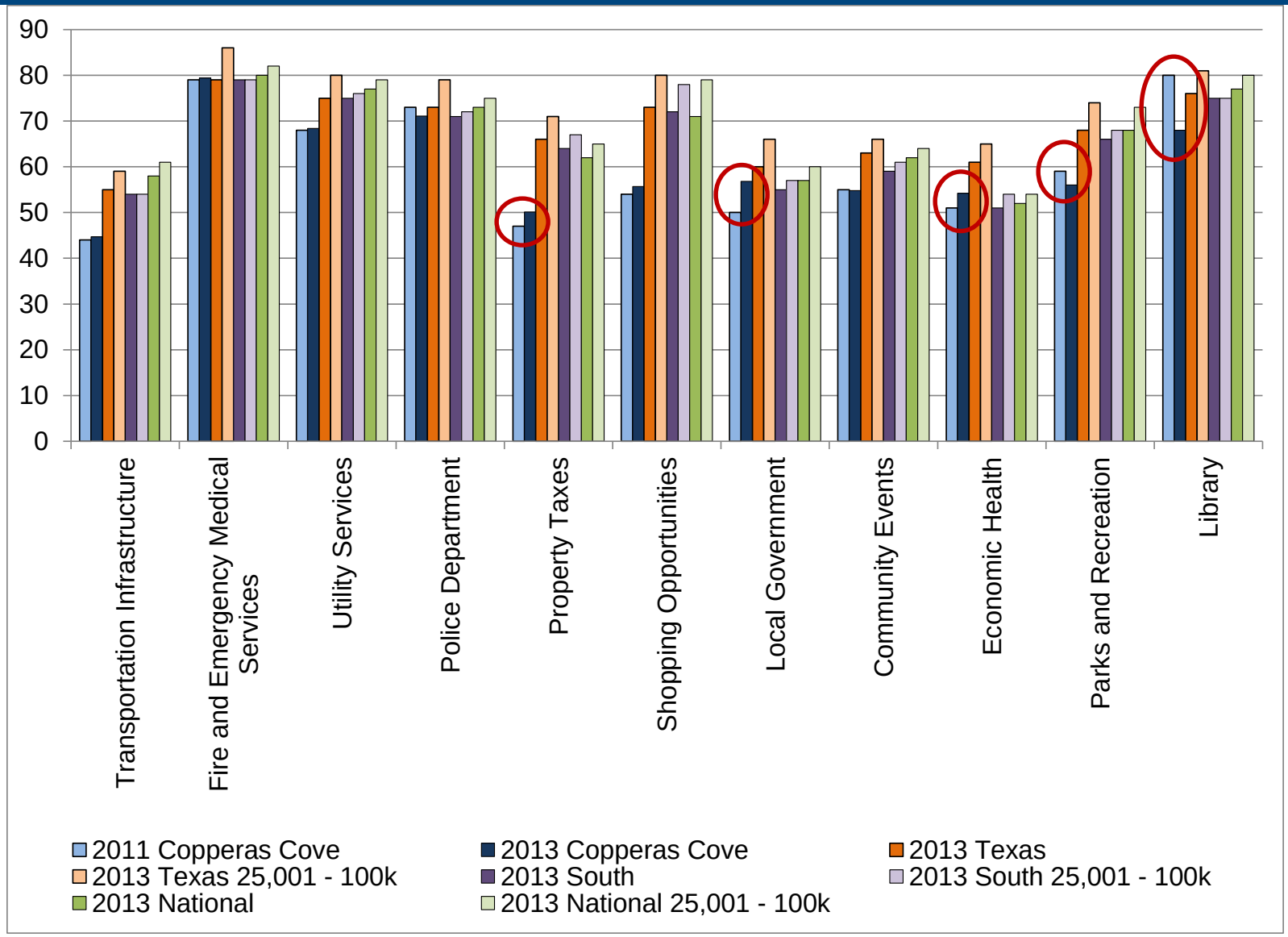
Community Image to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)

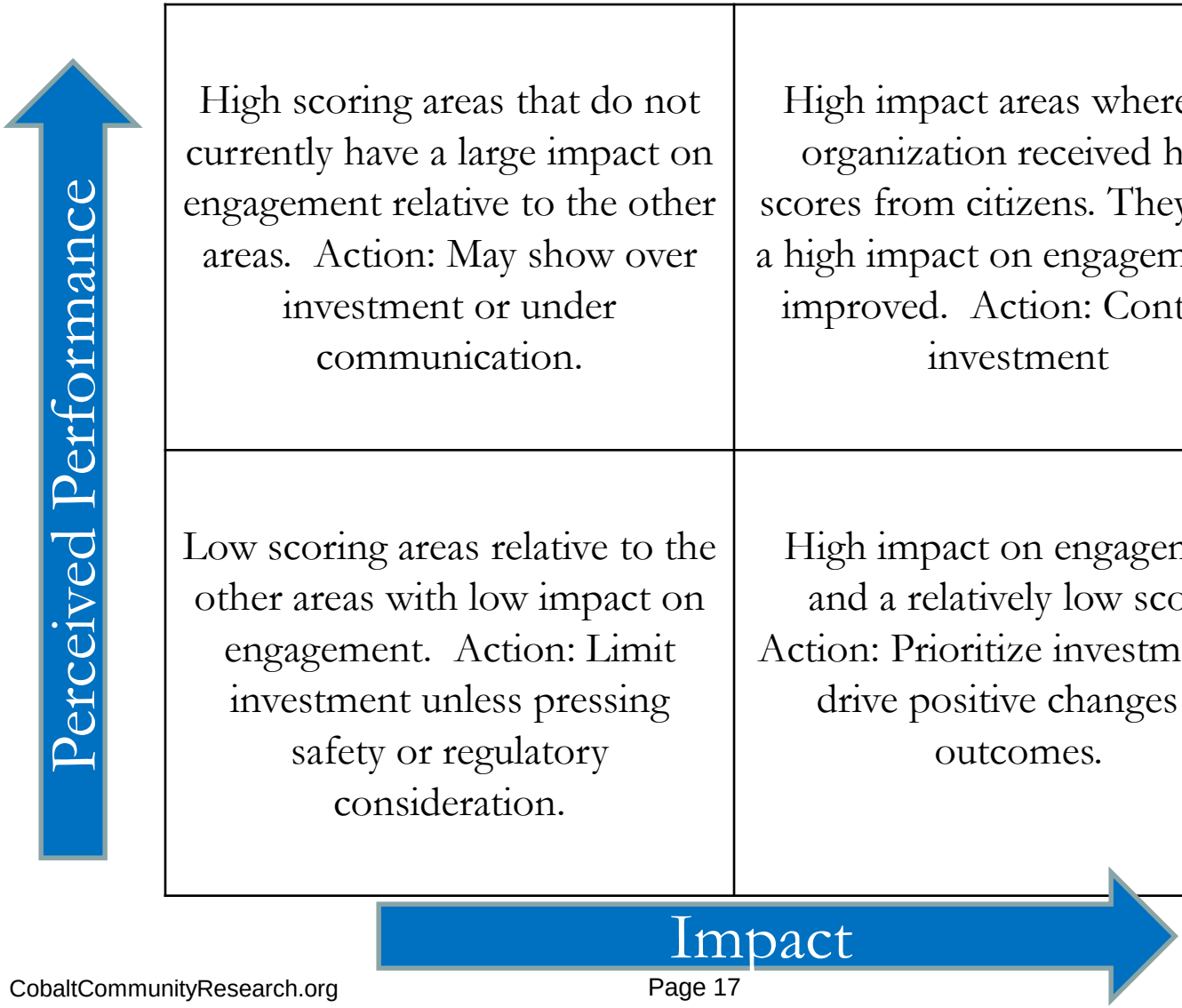


Quality of Life Components to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)

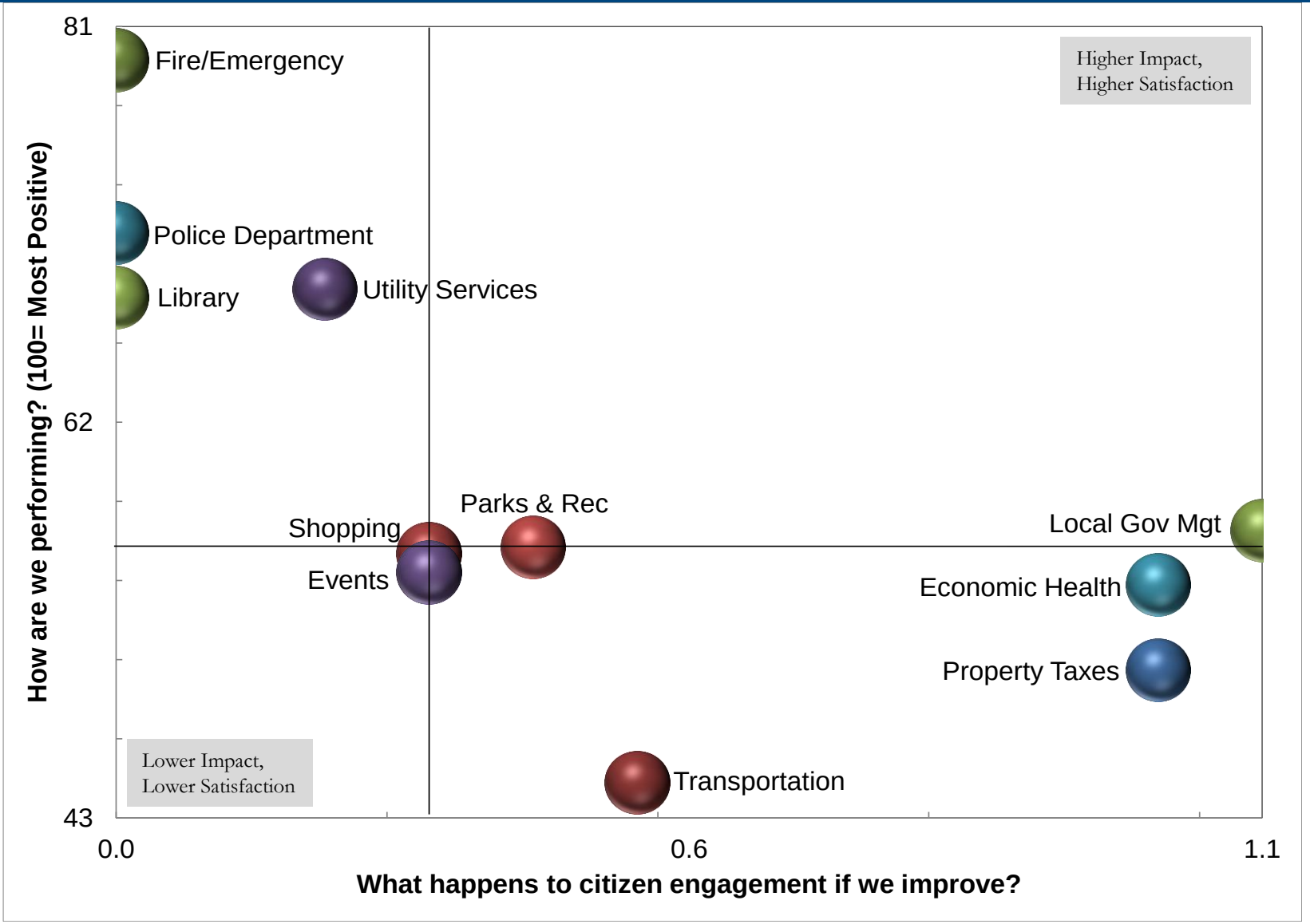


Understanding the Charts:
Community Questions – Long-term Drivers



City of Copperas Cove

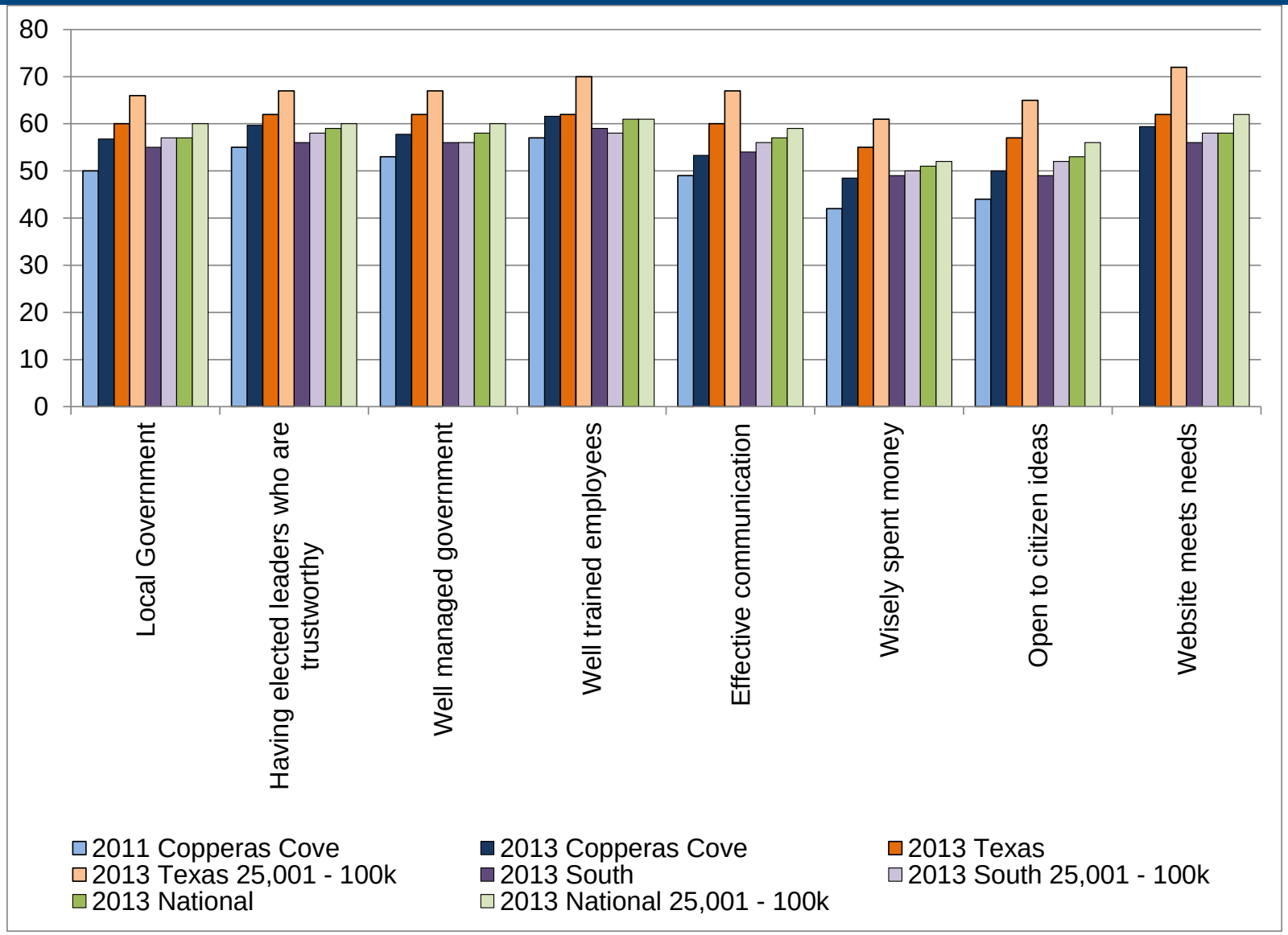
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:
Strategic Priorities



City of Copperas Cove

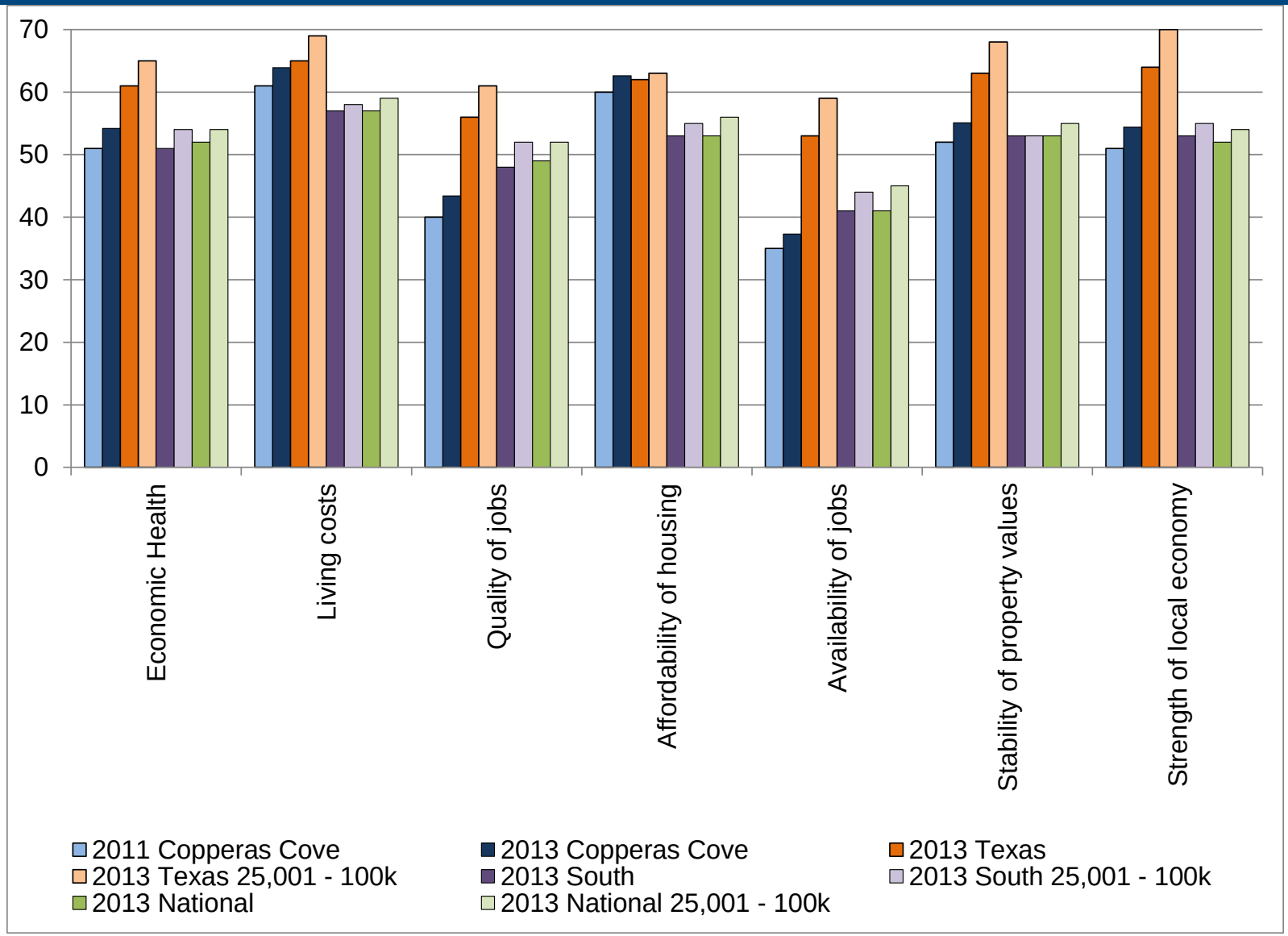
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Government Management



City of Copperas Cove

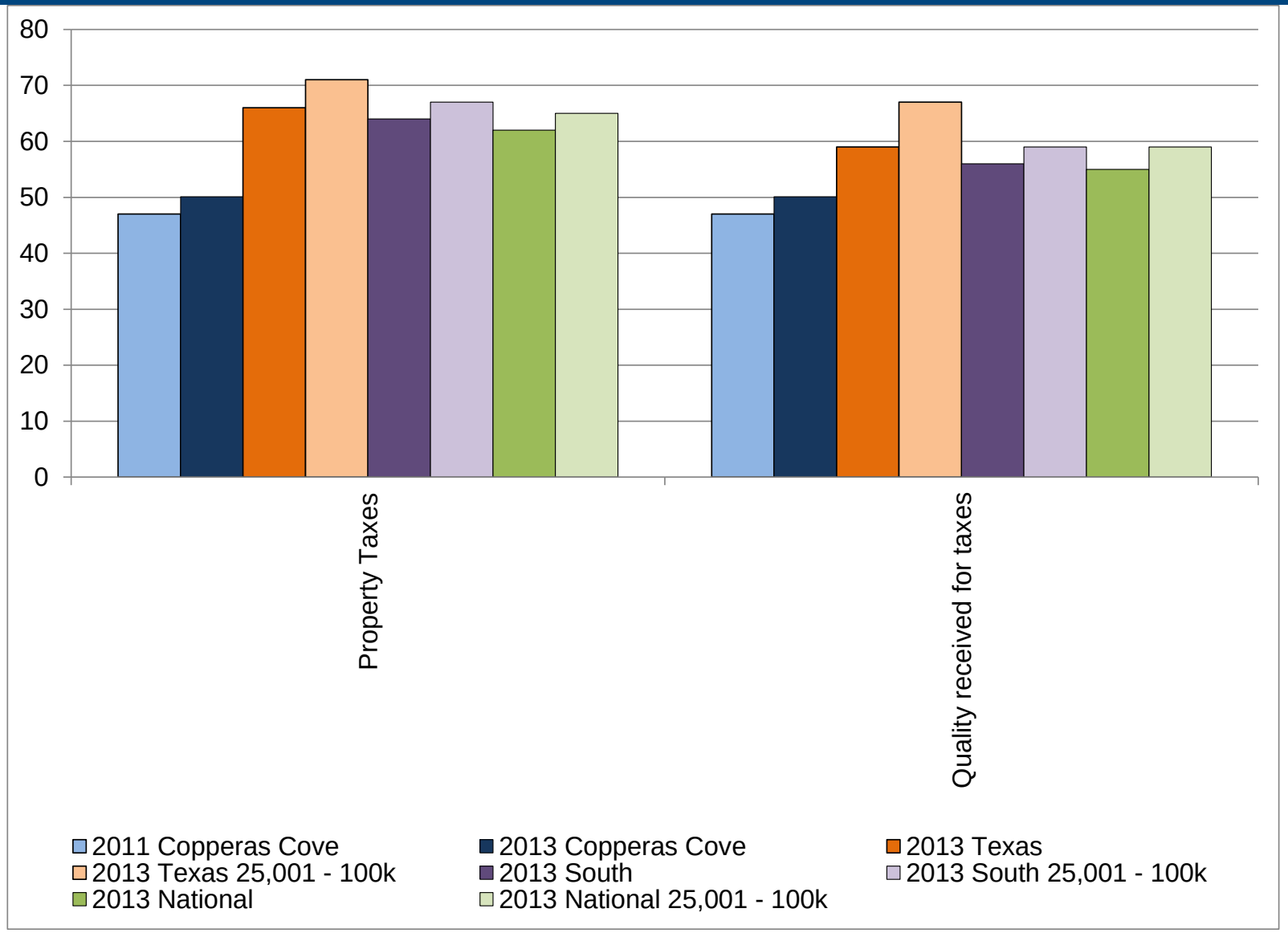
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:
Economic Health



City of Copperas Cove

Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

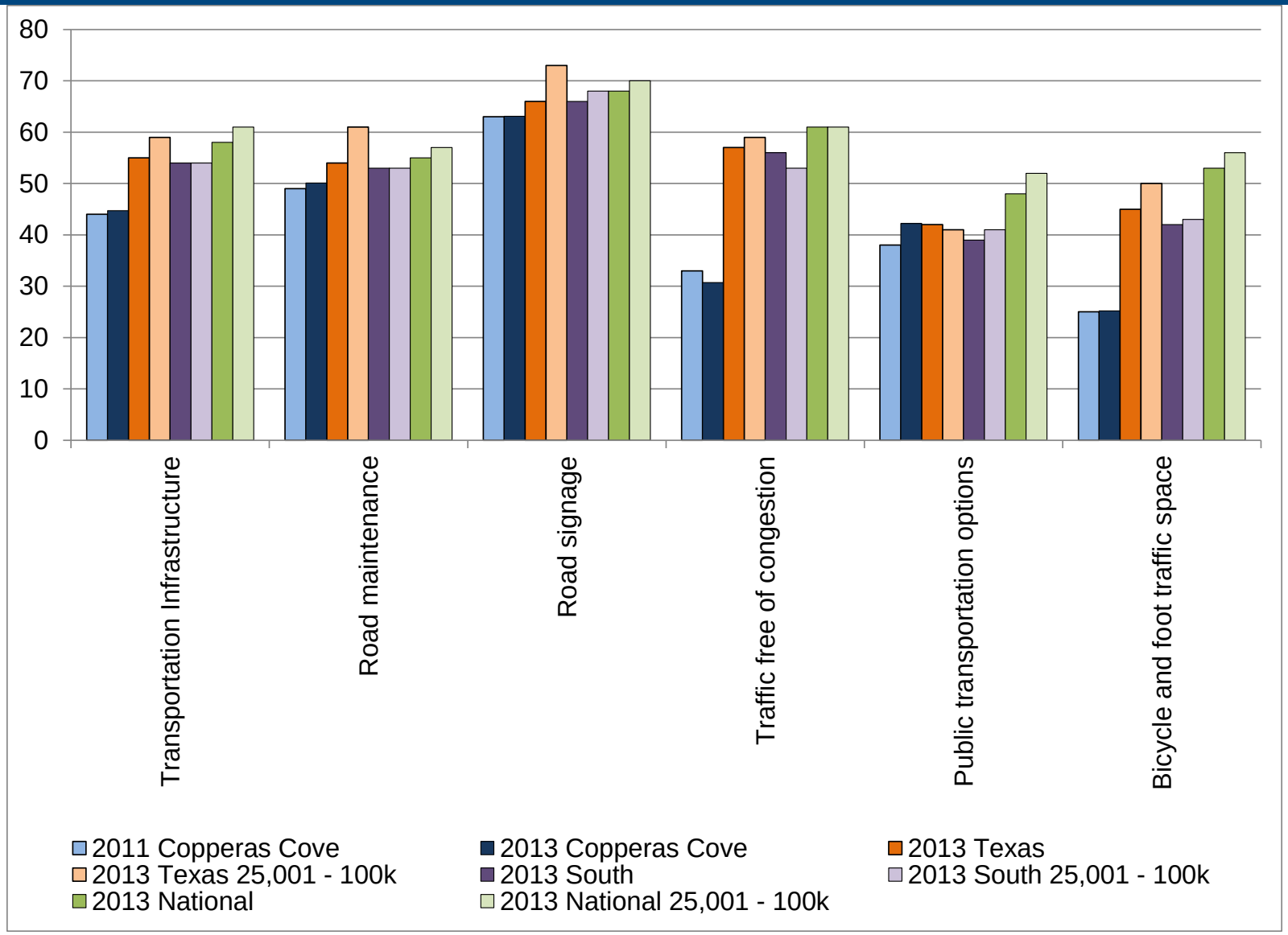
Property Taxes



City of Copperas Cove

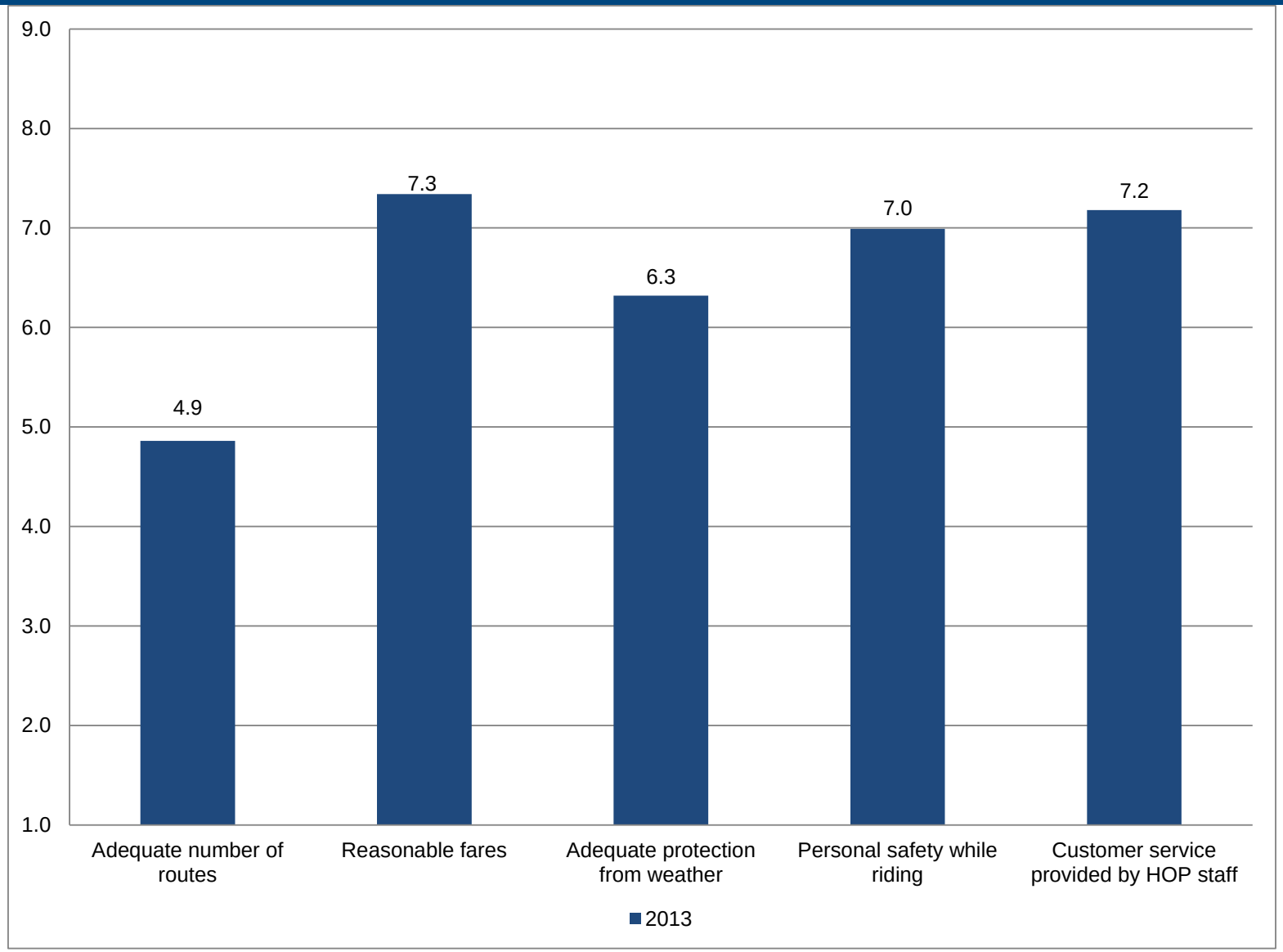
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Transportation Infrastructure



Public Transportation (The HOP)

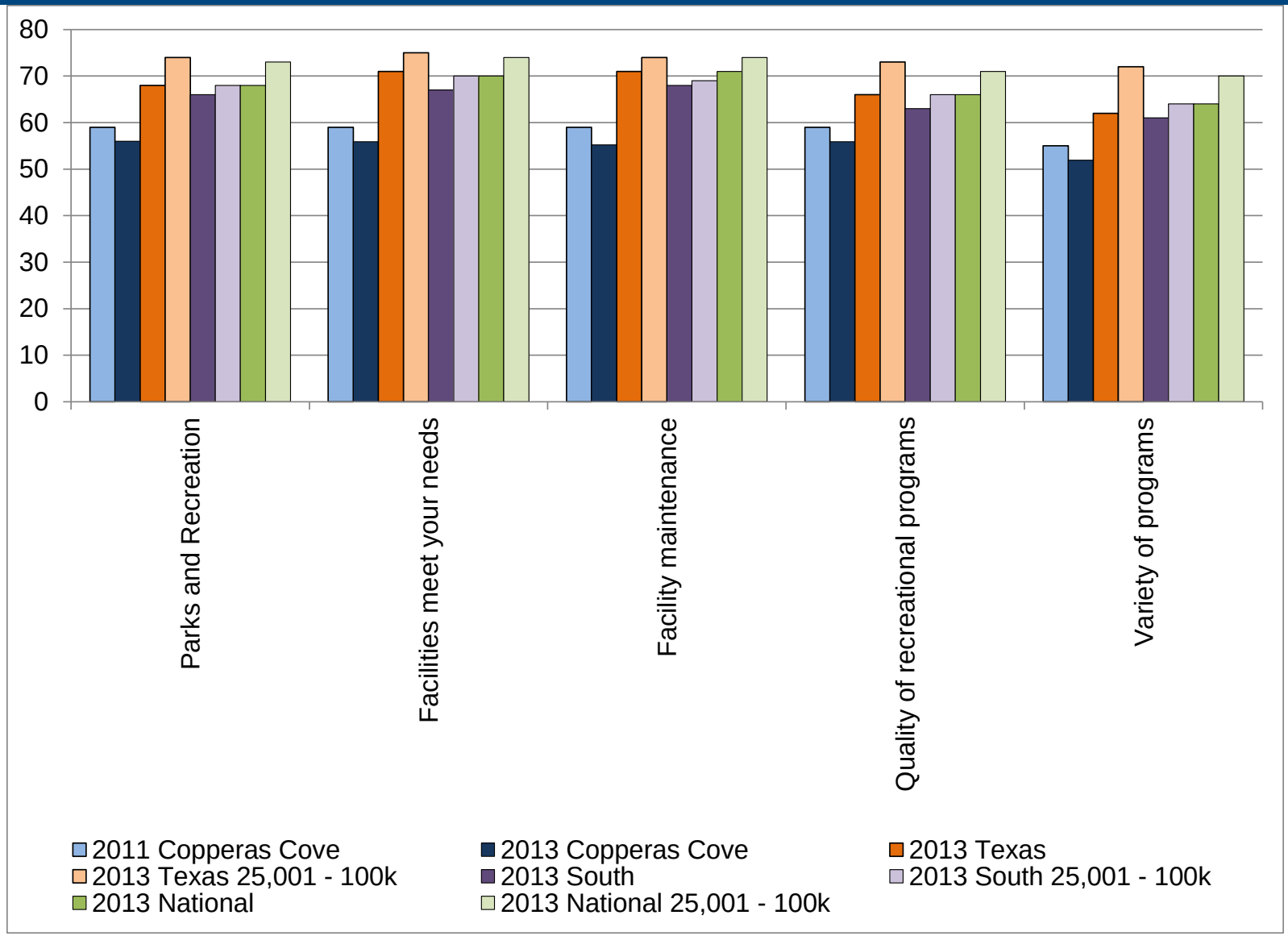
(High score = 10)



City of Copperas Cove

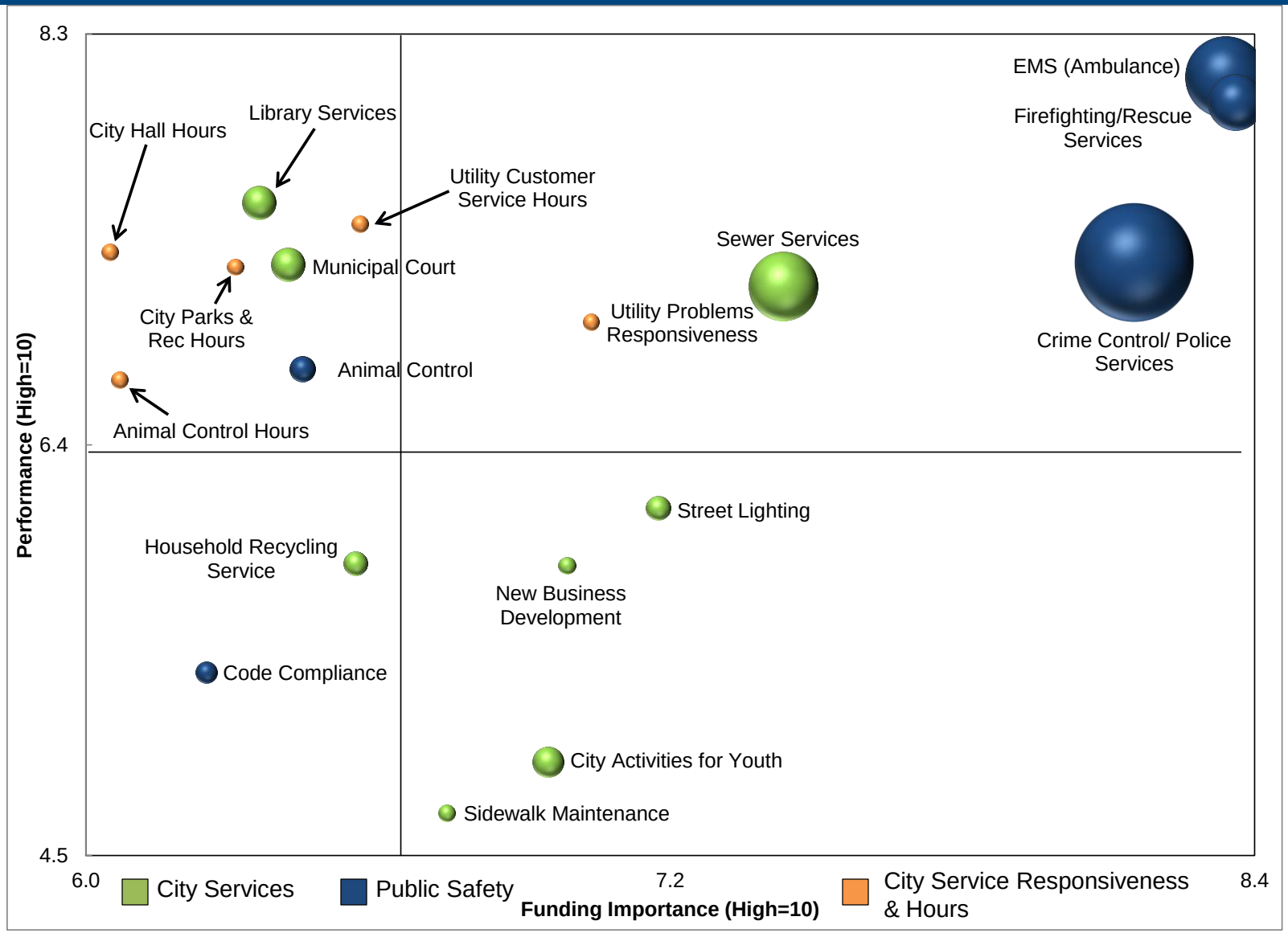
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Parks and Recreation



City Services & Programs Bubble Chart

(Size = Amount of $ invested)

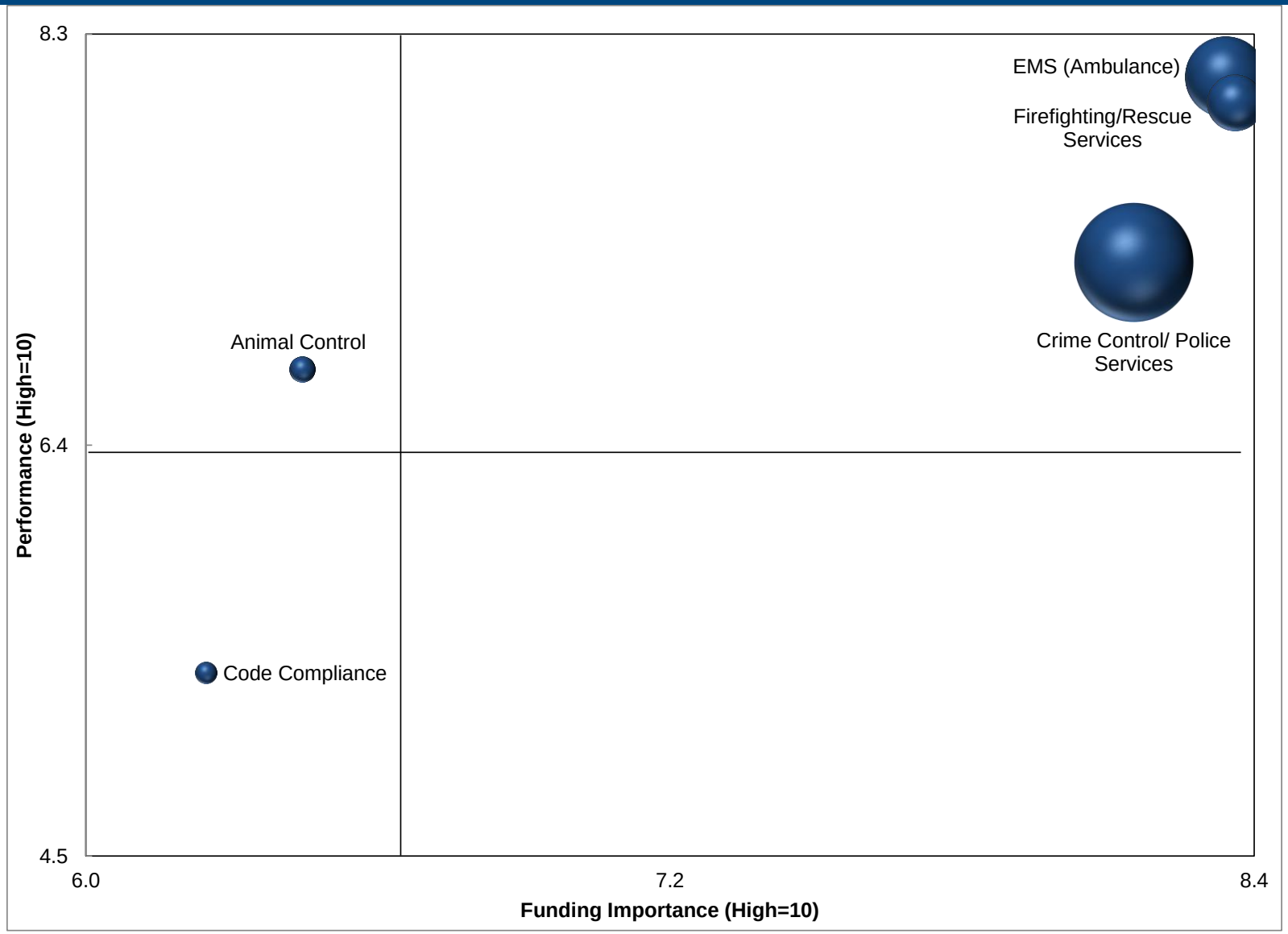


City Services Bubble Chart

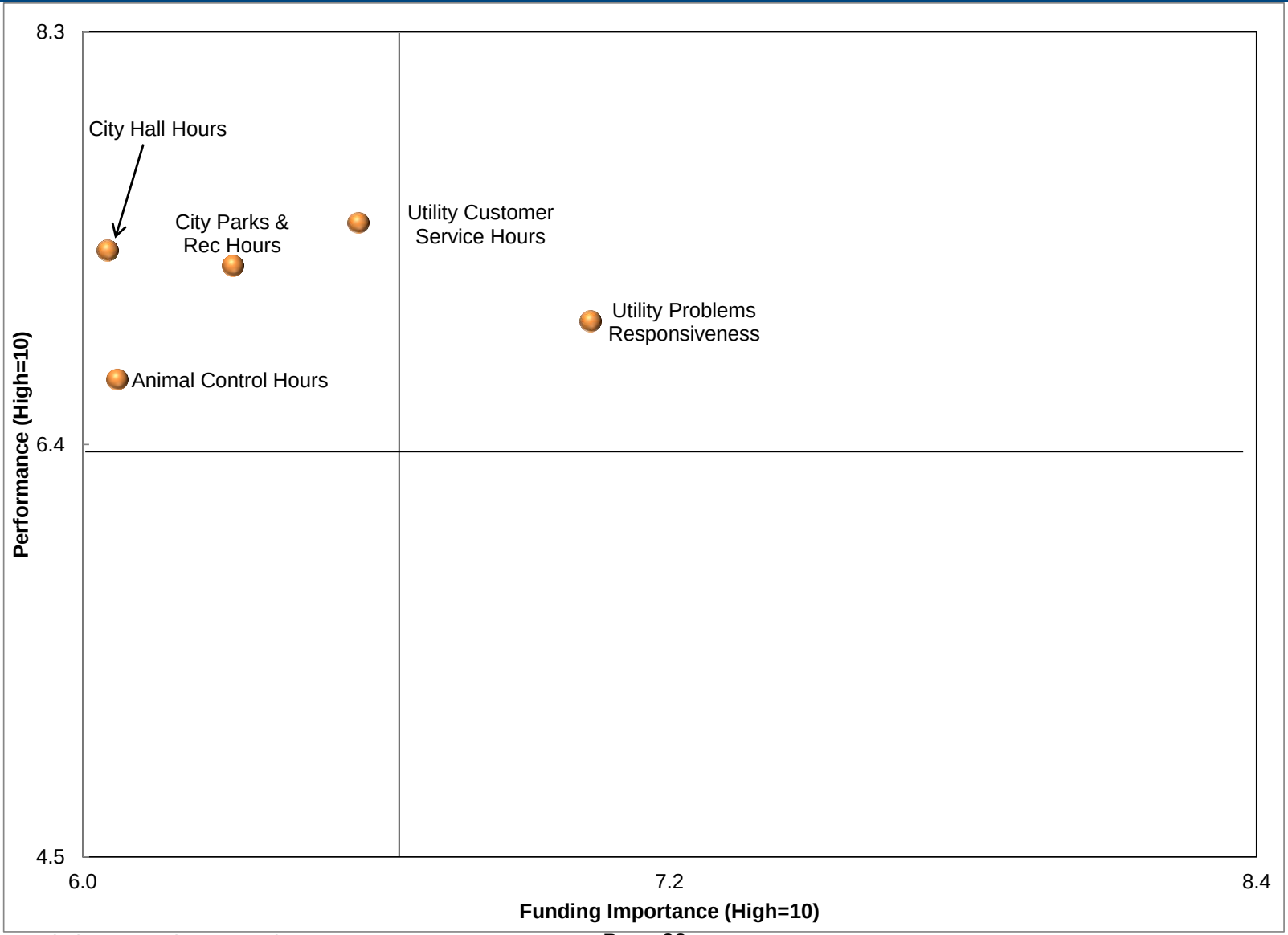
(Size = Amount of $ invested)

Public Safety Services Bubble Chart

(Size = Amount of $ invested)



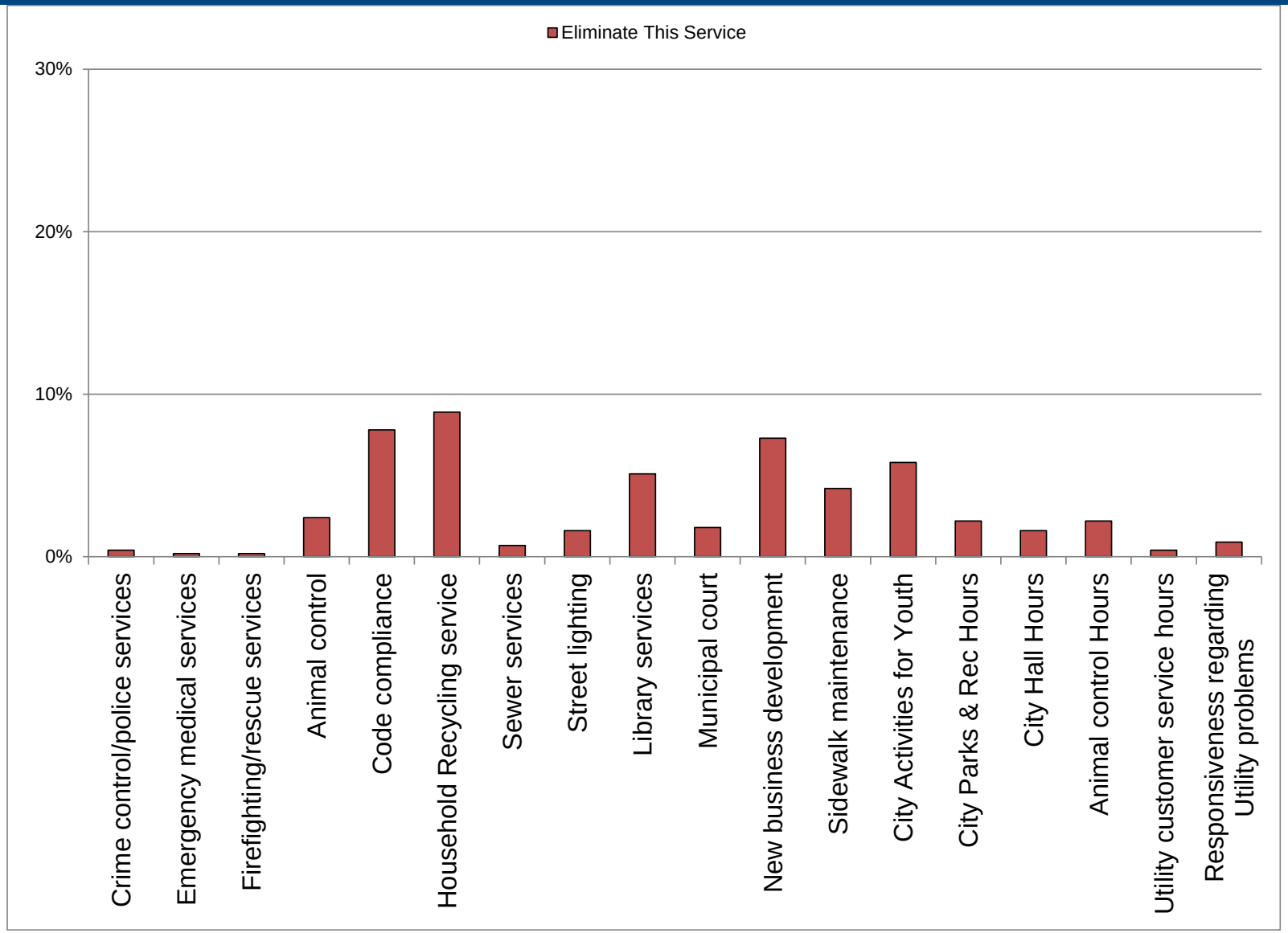
City Services Hours & Response Bubble Chart (Size = Amount of $ invested)



City of Copperas Cove

Support for Budgetary Actions

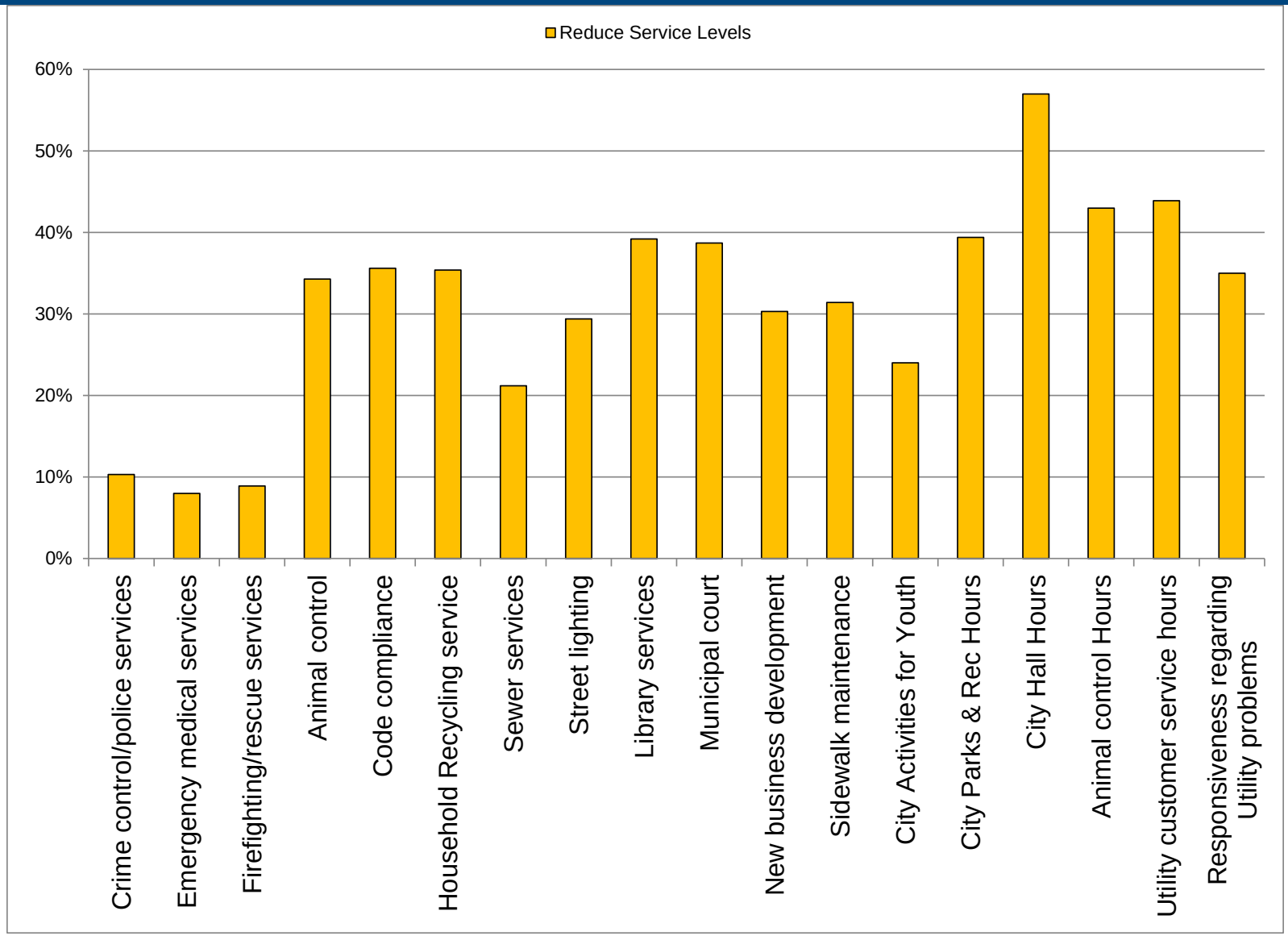
Eliminate Service



City of Copperas Cove

Support for Budgetary Actions

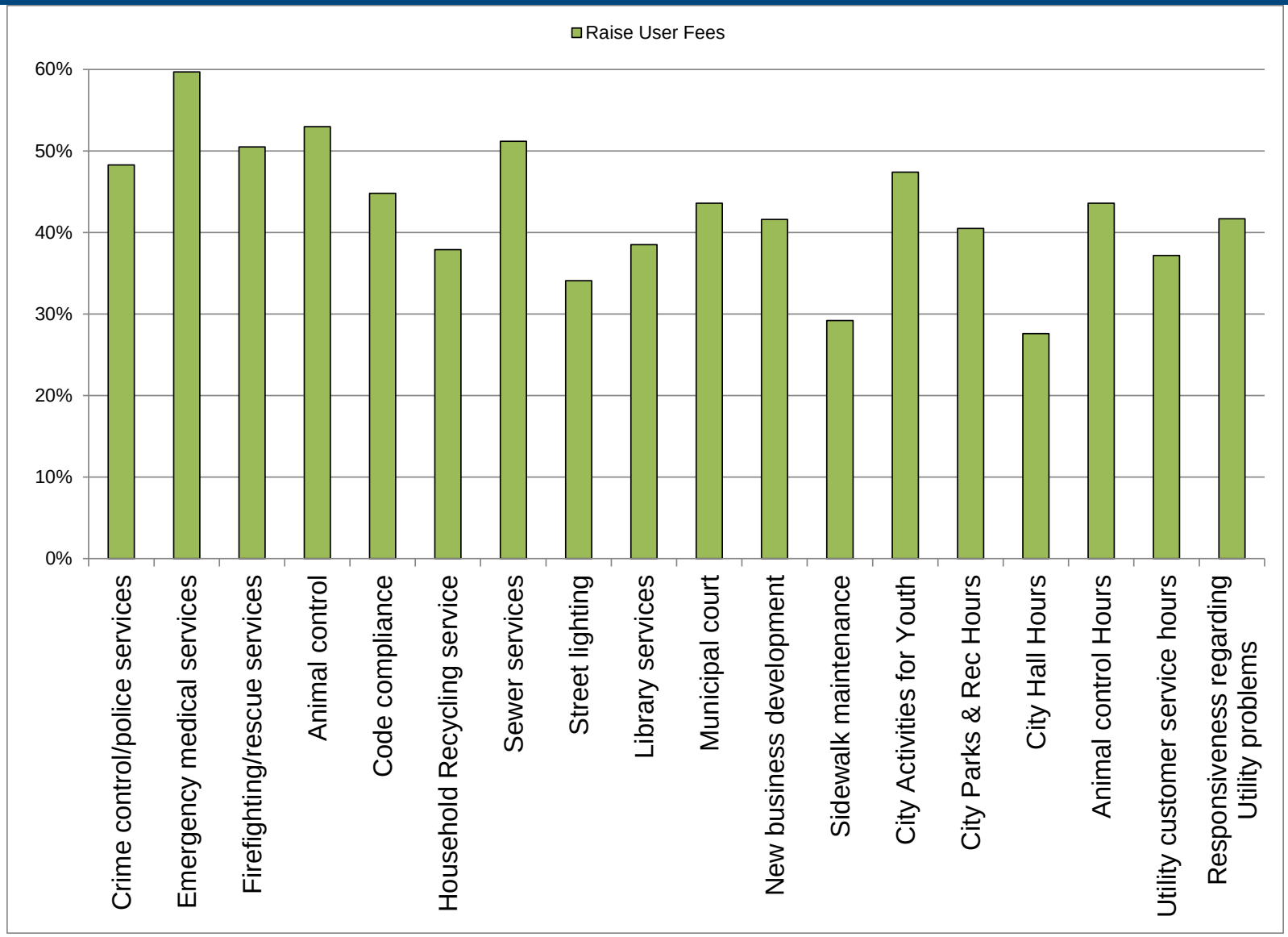
Reduce Service Levels



City of Copperas Cove

Support for Budgetary Actions

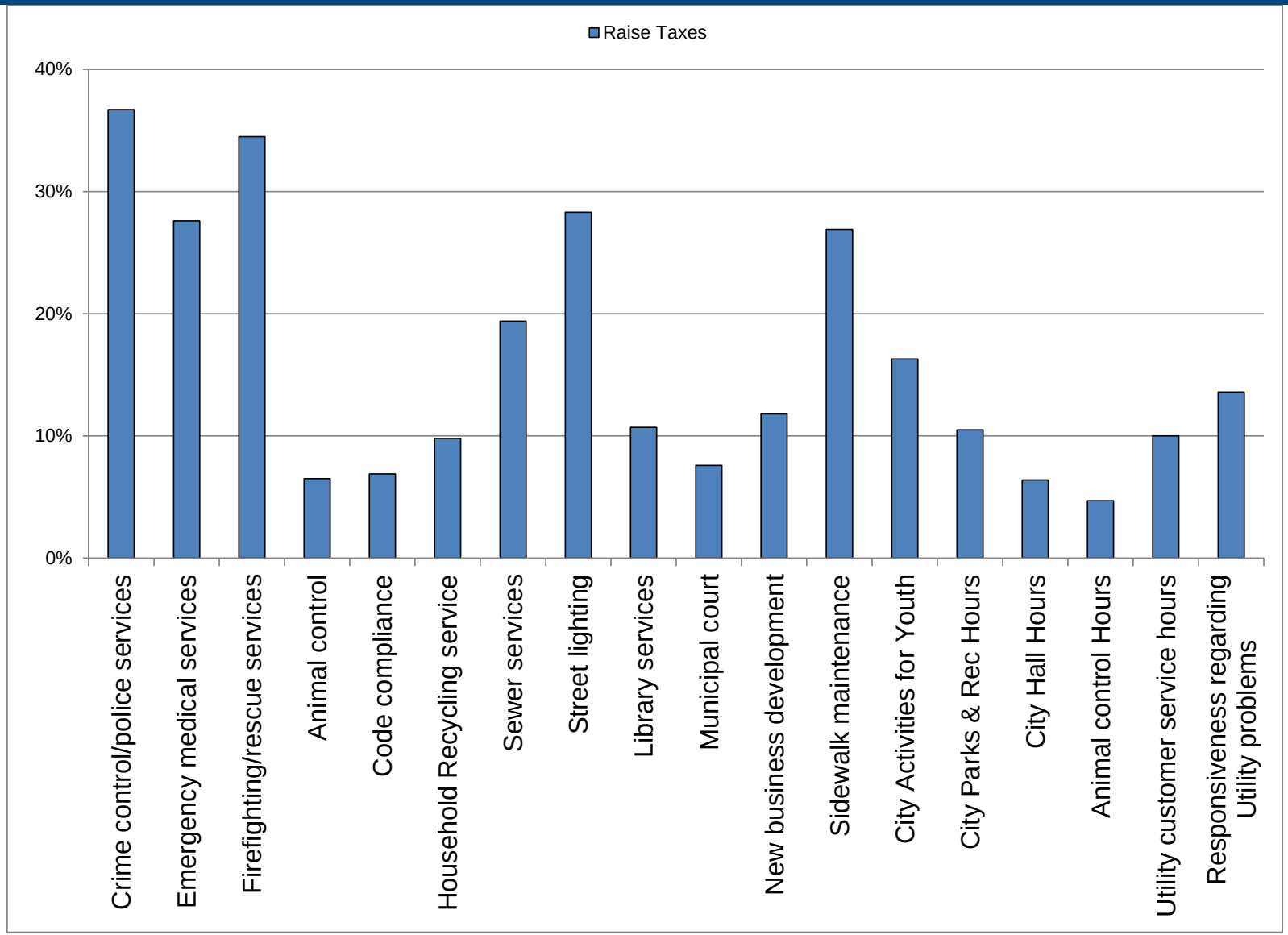
Raise User Fees



City of Copperas Cove

Support for Budgetary Actions

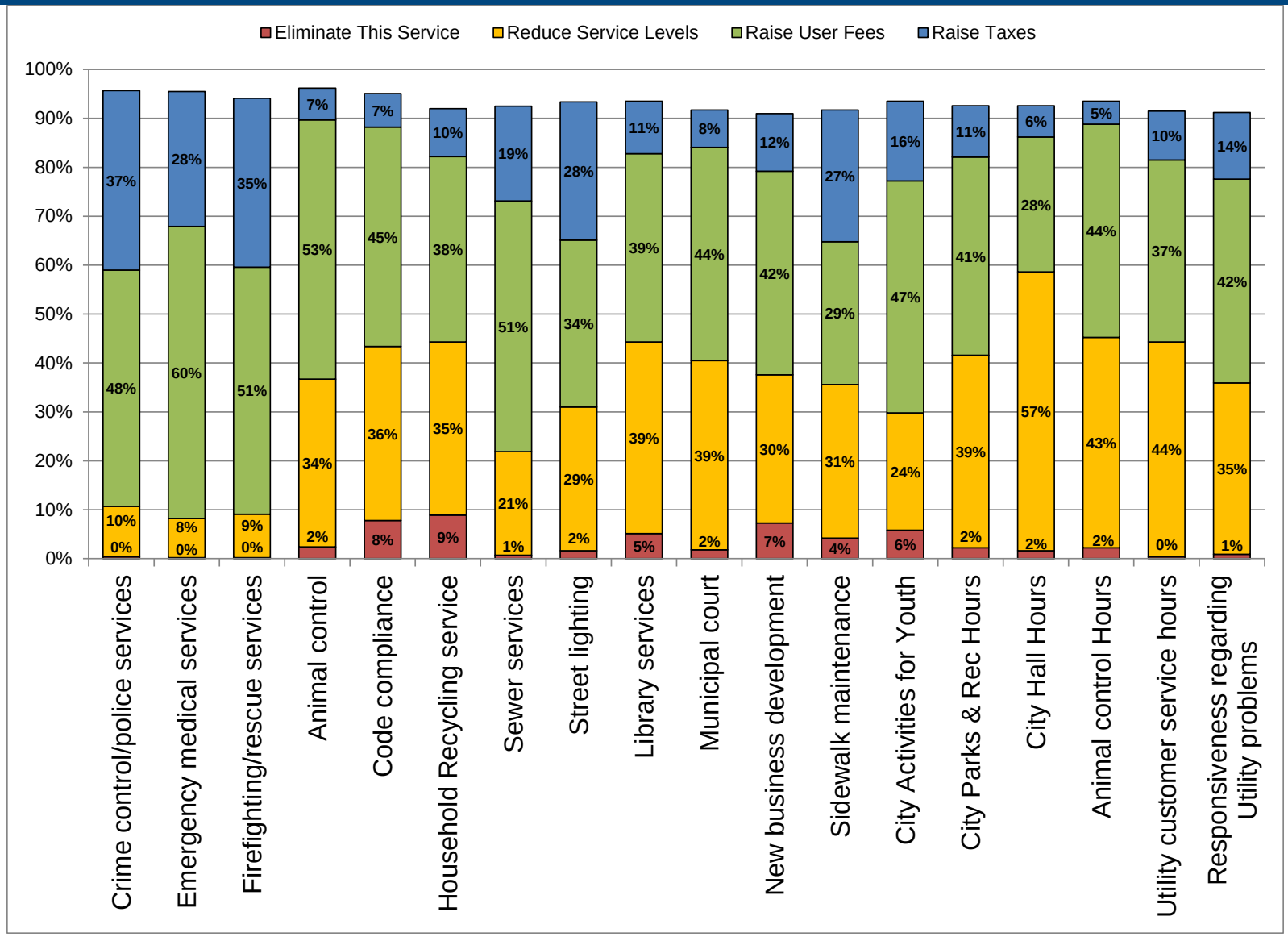
Raise Taxes



City of Copperas Cove

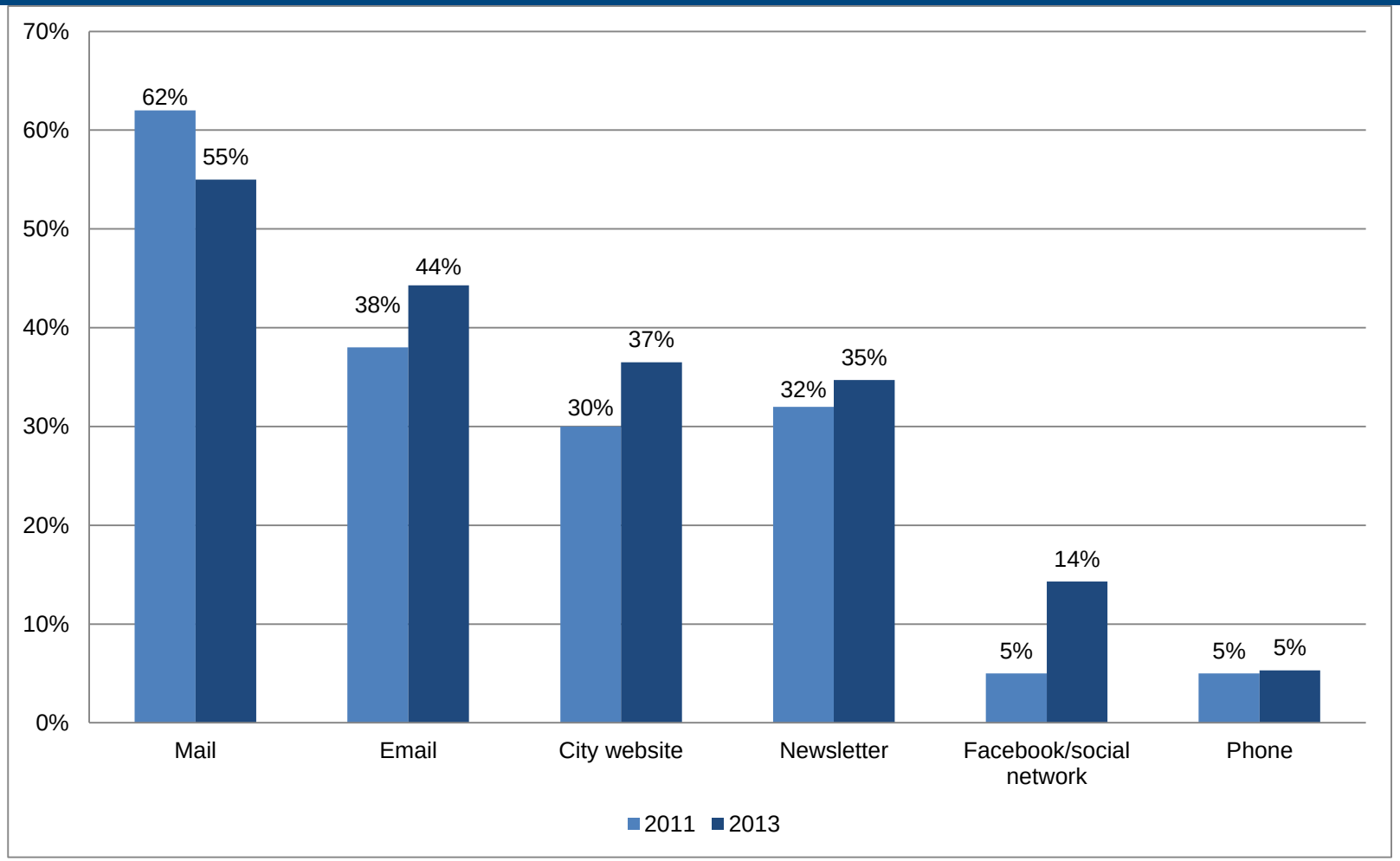
Support for Budgetary Actions

Preferred Options for All Services



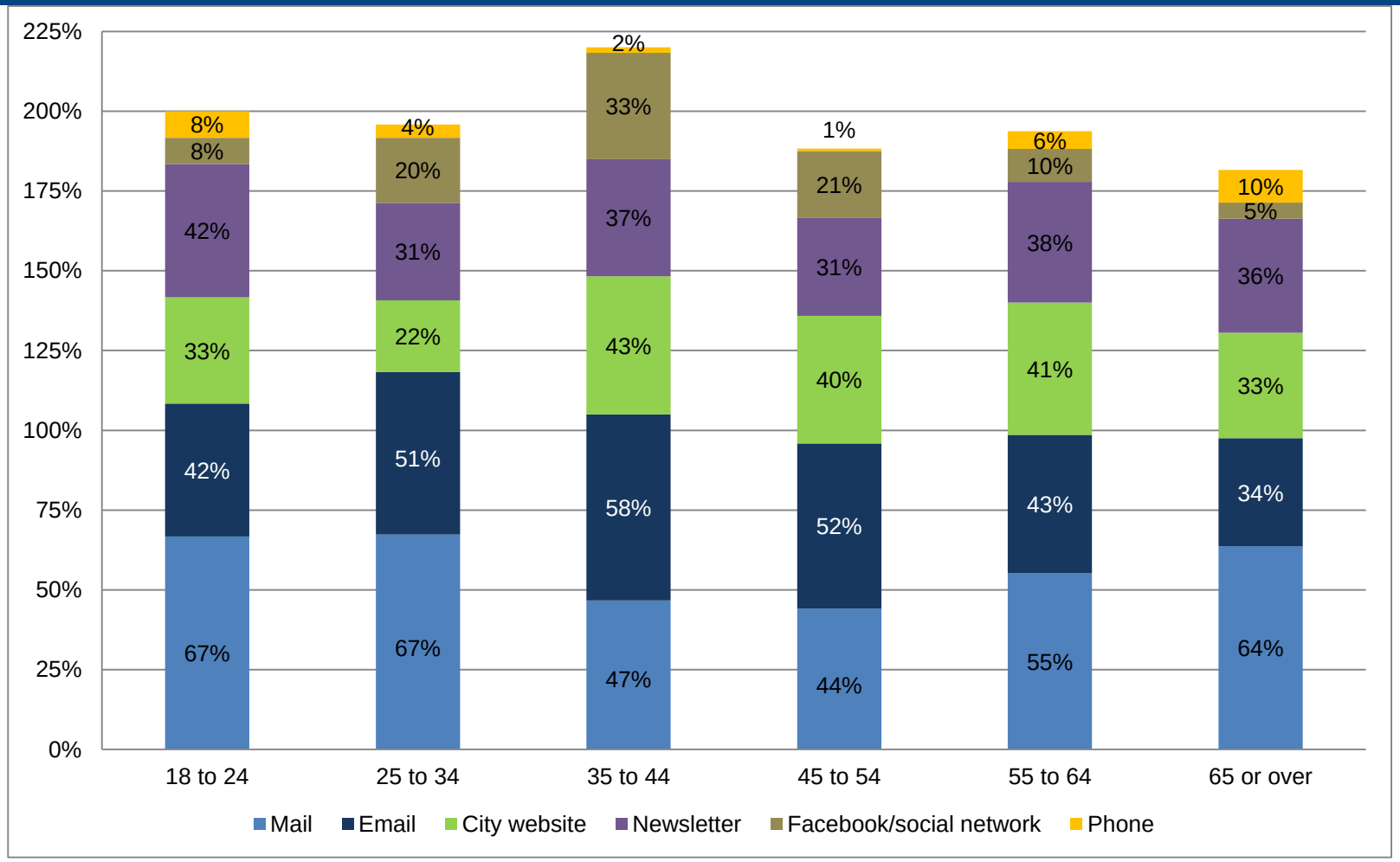
Communication Preference

(Percentage specifying)



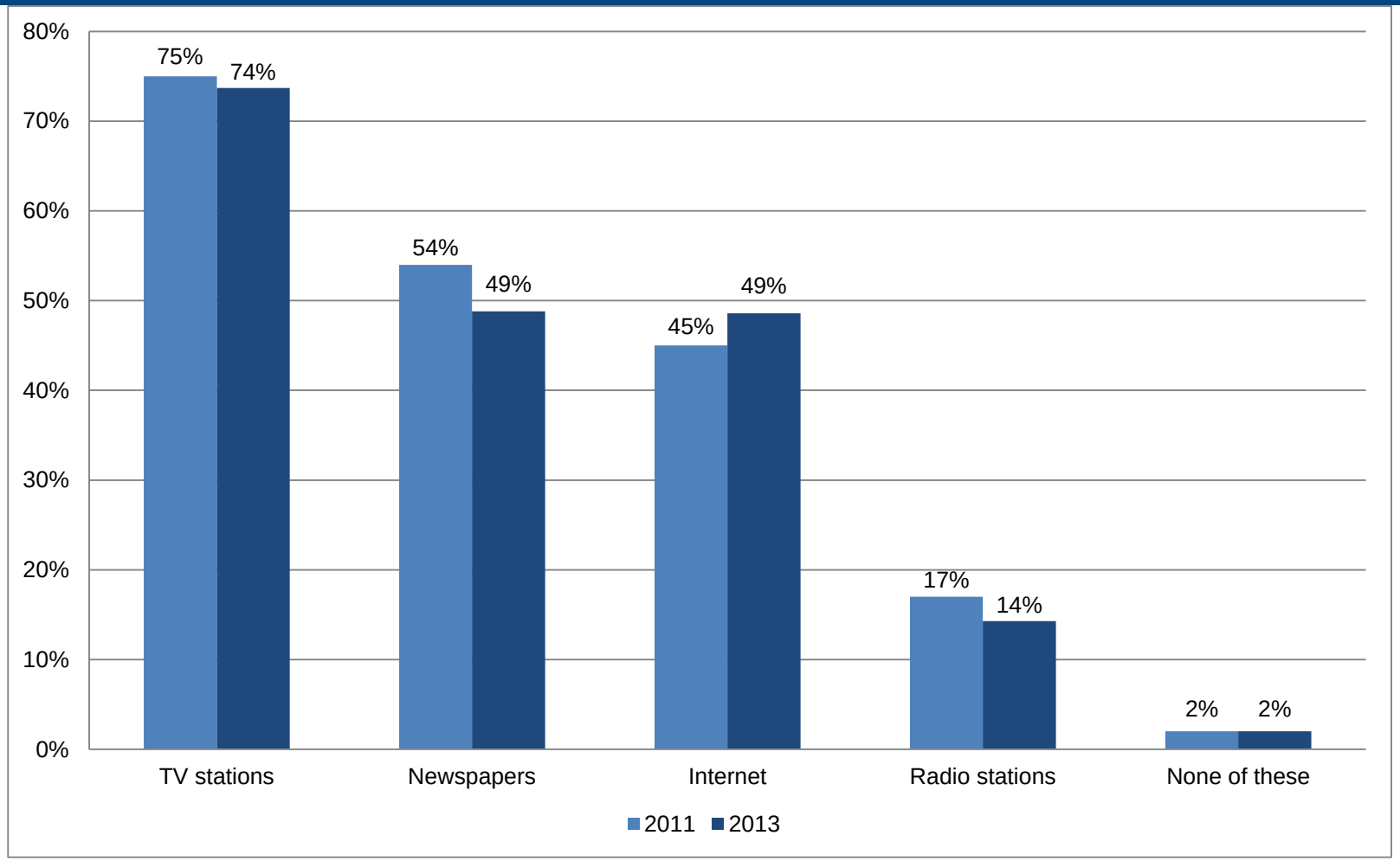
Communication Preference by Age

(Percentage specifying)

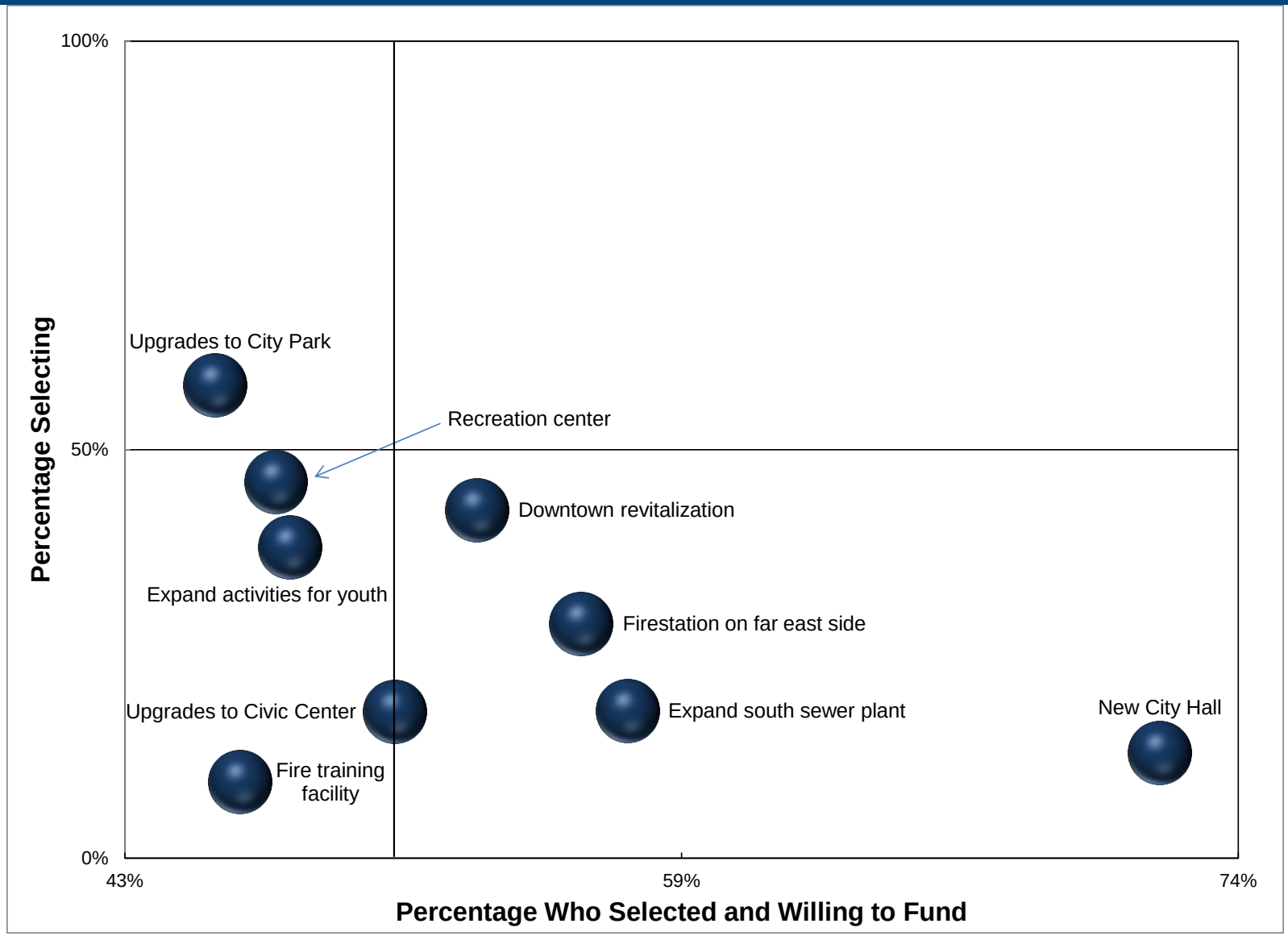


Where do you go most for local news?

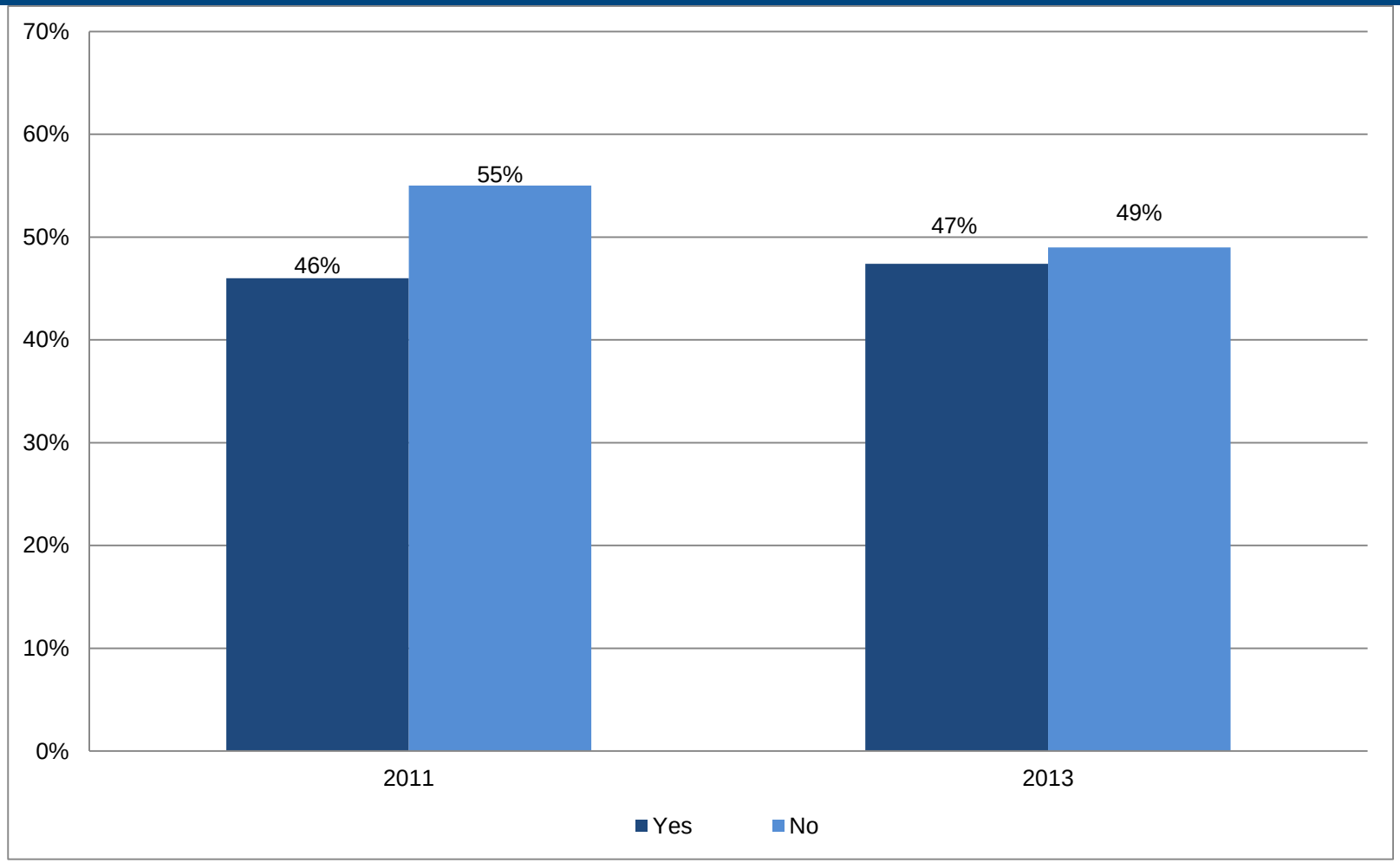
(Percentage specifying)



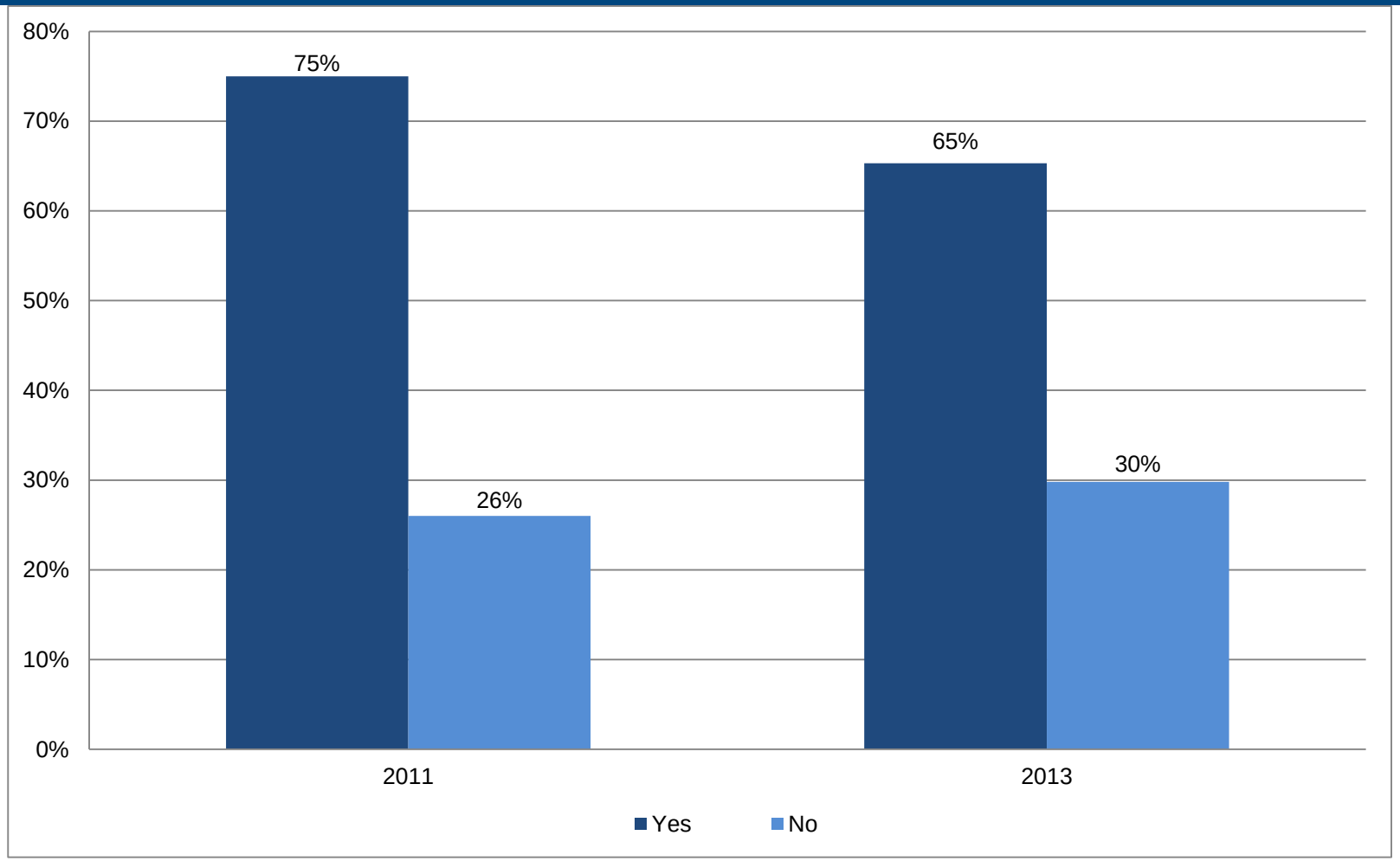
Future Projects Bubble Chart



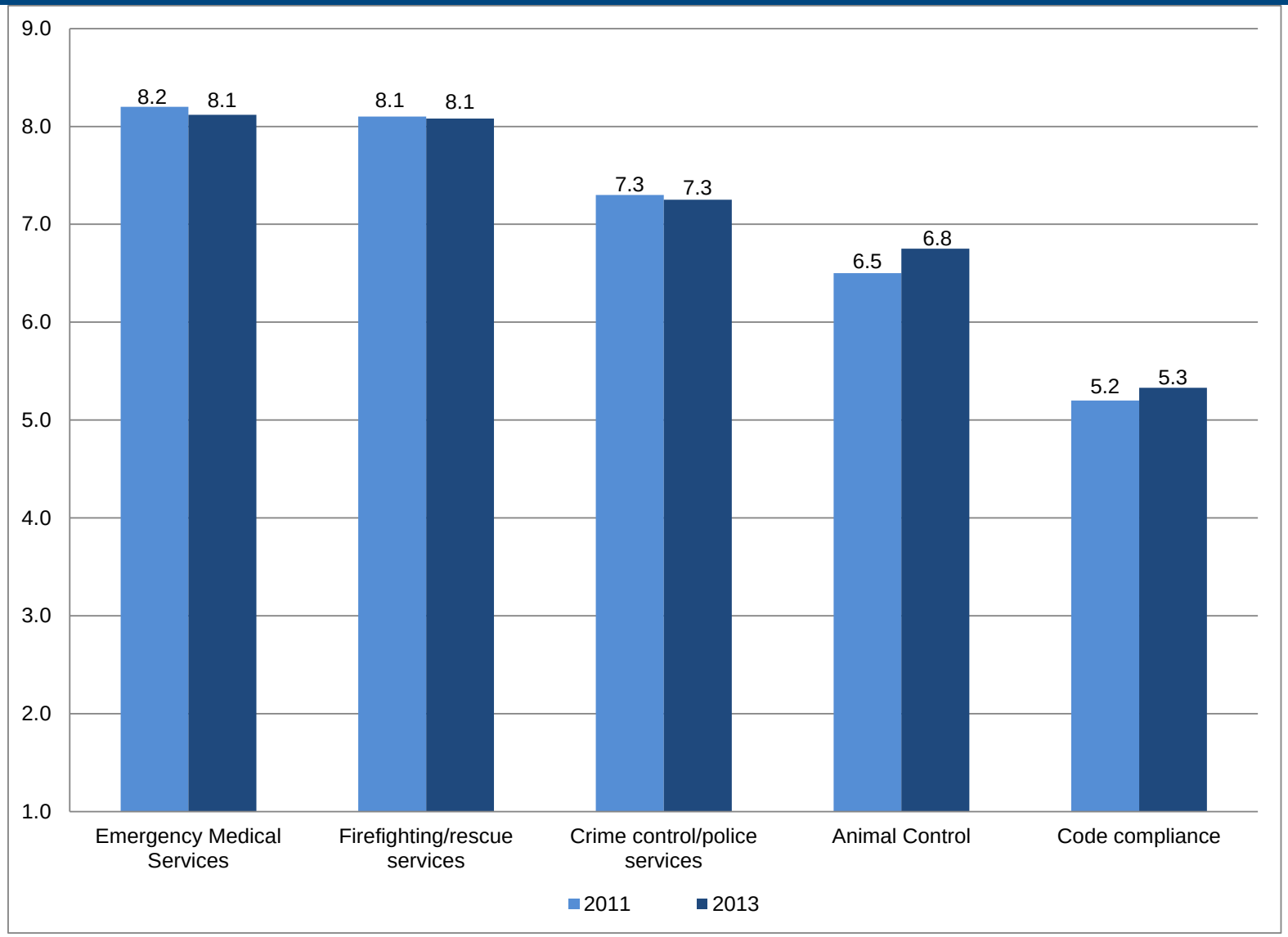
Support additional taxes and fees to pay for the projects?



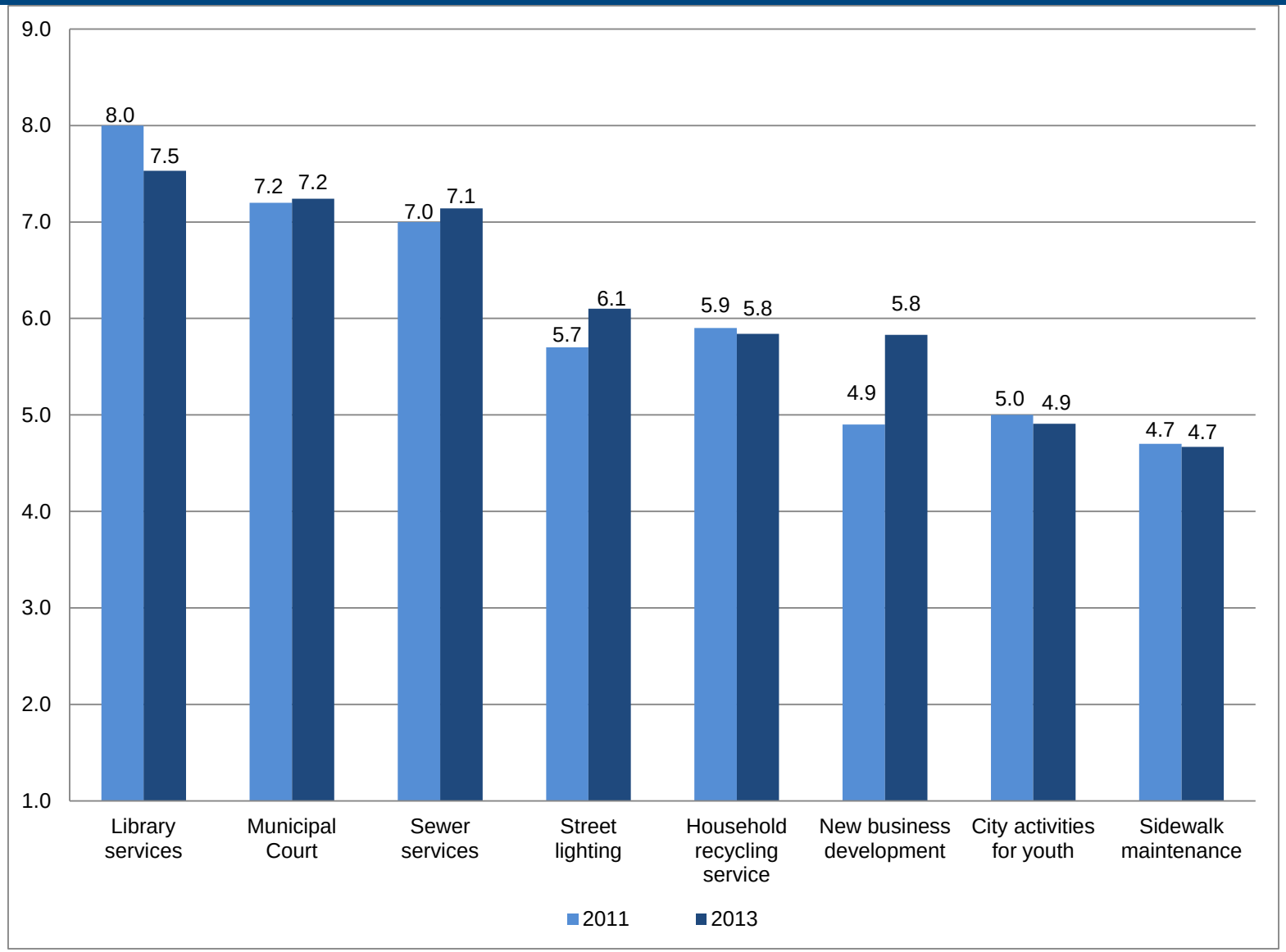
Support using a portion of sales tax revenue to establish a crime control district?



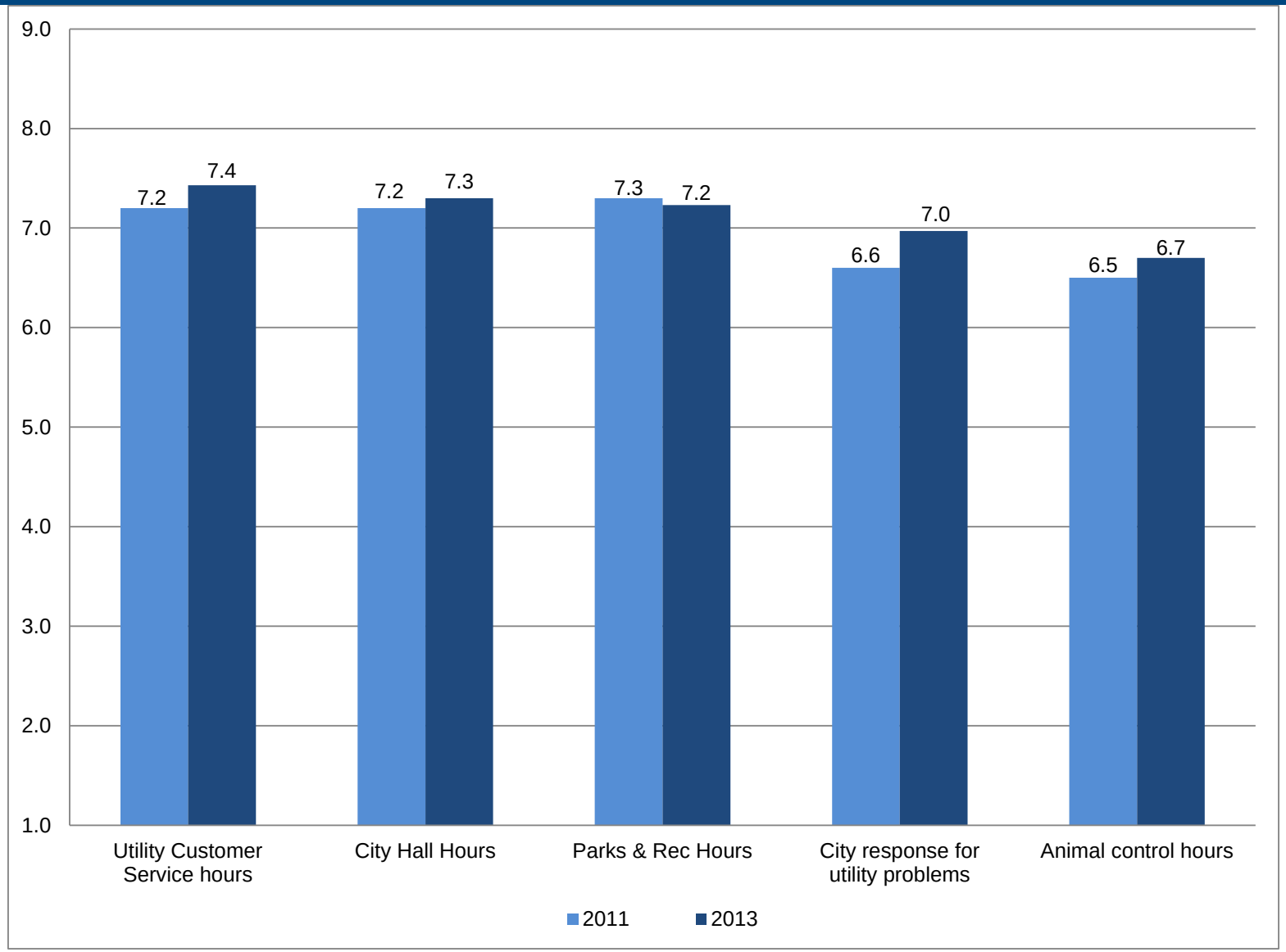
City Services & Programs Rated by Satisfaction
Public Safety Services
(High score = 10)



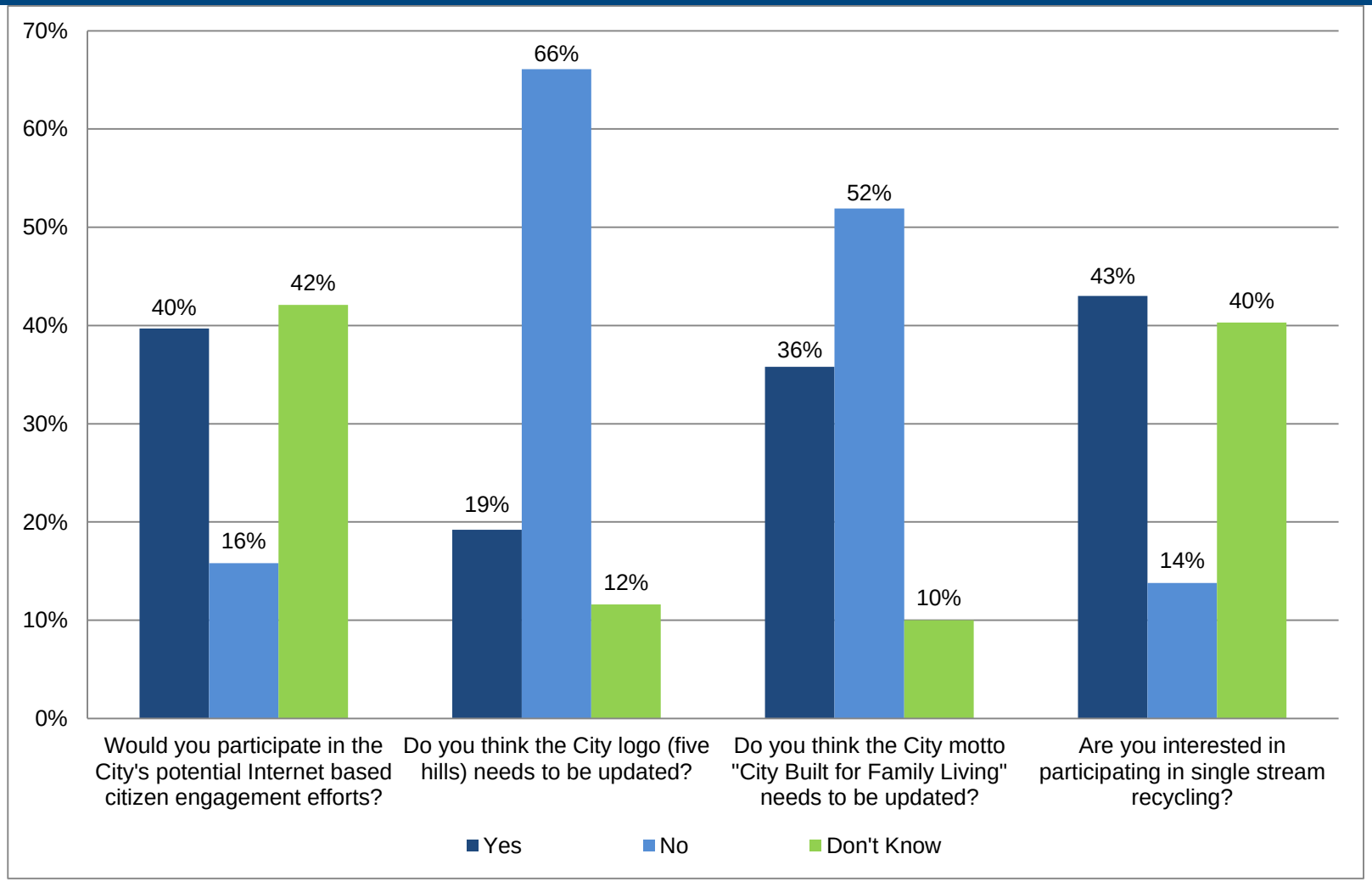
City Services & Programs Rated by Satisfaction
City Services
(High score = 10)



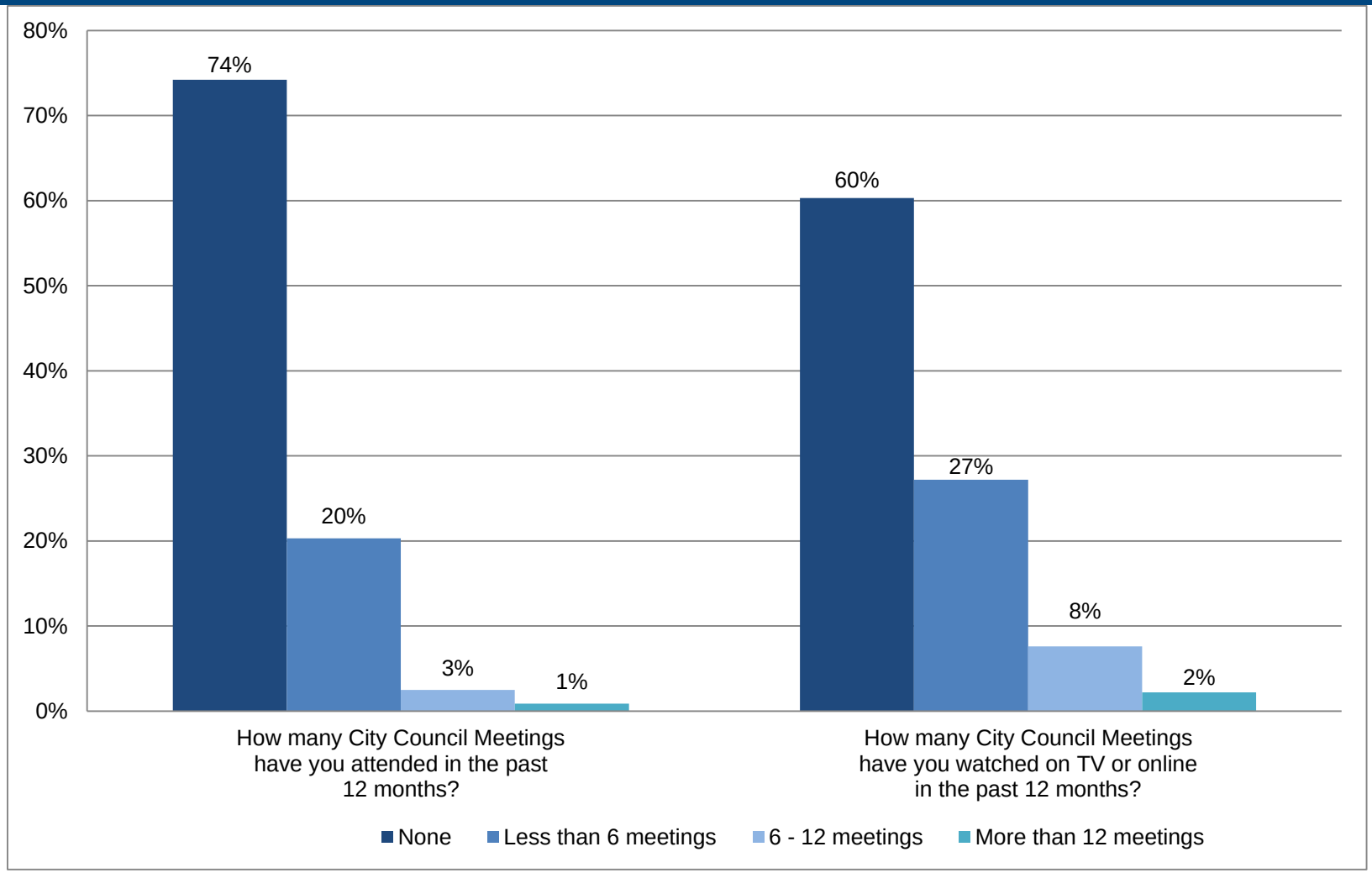
City Services & Programs Rated by Satisfaction
City Service Hours and Response
(High score = 10)



Citizen Engagement



City Council Meetings



Text Cloud: Most Important Issues Facing the City of Copperas Cove

Top Themes:

1. **Business** – expand, improve quality, new development
2. **Traffic** – congestion, control, volume
3. **Activities** – more for youth and young adult, recreational

Note: See full list of comments for context

Implementing Results

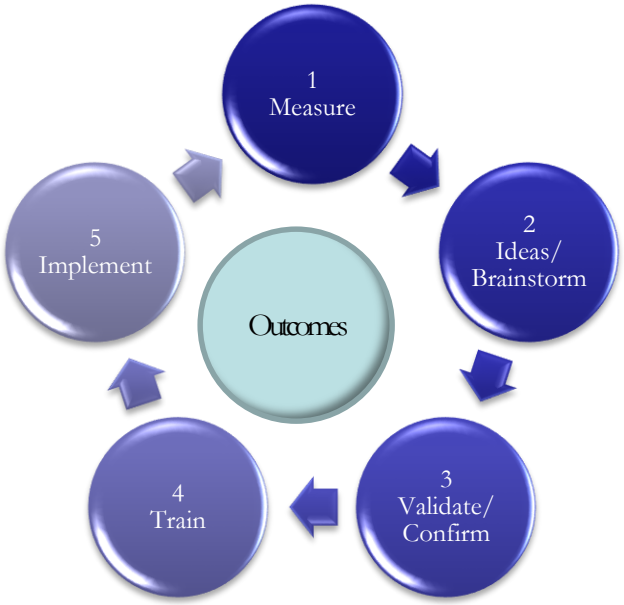
Perception v Reality: Minimize Distortion or Fix Real Performance Issues

City of Copperas Cove

Strategy is About Action:
Improve Performance to Improve Outcomes

The diagram at the right provides a framework for following up on this survey.

- The first step (measurement) is complete. This measurement helps prioritize resources and create a baseline against which progress can be measured.
- The second step is to use internal teams to further analyze the results and form ideas about why respondents answered as they did and potential actions in response.
- The third step is to validate ideas and potential actions through conversations with residents and line staff – do the ideas and actions make sense. Focus groups, short special-topic surveys and benchmarking are helpful.
- The fourth step is to provide staff with the skills and tools to effectively implement the actions.
- The fifth step is to execute the actions.
- The final step is to re-measure to ensure progress was made and track changes in resident needs.



Be Clear About Your Strategic Outcomes

What are the characteristics of an ideal community through residents' eyes?

Cobalt CommunityResearch

Your residents want you to succeed.

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